

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08244097 9

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MICROFILMED
DATE 3/11/78

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Korean Stone Dog in Front of Palace.

Digitized by Google

KOREA FROM ITS CAPITAL:

WITH A

CHAPTER ON MISSIONS.

BY THE

REV. GEORGE W. GILMORE, A.M.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION
AND SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK,

1334 CHESTNUT STREET.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
633433 A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1932 L

COPYRIGHT, 1892, BY

THE TRUSTEES OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION
AND SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK.

All Rights Reserved.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

WESTCOTT & THOMSON,
Stereotypers and Electrotypers, Philada.

Digitized by Google

TO

THE FACULTIES

OF

THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

AND OF

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF EQUIPMENT FOR LIFE'S DUTIES,

THIS BOOK IS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

THE author's apology for inflicting a book upon the public is that he treats of a country concerning which comparatively little is known. His aim has been to supplement the very able book of Dr. Griffis, the interesting work of Mr. Lowell and what we may call almost the pioneer work of the Rev. John Ross. He has tried to add to the public's knowledge of a curious and, in some respects, very fascinating people. He has not attempted to treat of the history of the nation—that Dr. Griffis has done.

The narrative is confined to what a person may see and learn while sojourning in the peninsula. Doubtless the experienced will find many mistakes of various kinds. For those the author asks pardon, and will be thankful to any one who will indicate the lapses.

Grateful acknowledgment is hereby made (1) to the Rev. H. G. Underwood, D. D., for permission to use several of the finest illustrations in the book; (2) to

Digitized by Google

the editors of *The* (*New York*) *Evening Post* for leave to use the letters contributed to that journal by the author while in Korea; (3) to the Rev. Samuel Macauley Jackson and the Rev. Charles R. Gillett for encouragement and advice in the plan of the book; (4) to the Rev. J. R. Miller, D. D., editor of the Presbyterian Board of Publication, for his most competent assistance and innumerable suggestions in putting the book through the press; and, last, to my wife for her invaluable aid in smoothing down many nodosities in the composition.

THE AUTHOR.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Country	9
II.	The Government	22
III.	The Capital	44
IV.	The Language	58
V.	The People	75
VI.	Domestic Life	96
VII.	Attire and Adornment	134
VIII.	Woman and her Work	149
IX.	Amenities and Solemnities	158
X.	Religion	185
XI.	Resources	199
XII.	Progress toward Civilization	226
XIII.	Foreign Relations	250
XIV.	Foreign Life in Korea	265
XV.	Missionary Work	291

Digitized by Google

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

KOREAN STONE DOG *Frontispiece.*
MANDARIN IN COURT DRESS 27
CITY WALL 45
ENCLOSURE IN PALACE GROUNDS 50
LITTLE PORTERS AND CANDY VENDER 65
GROUP OF PEASANTS 77
MY TEACHER AND HIS WIFE 89
PEASANTS' HUTS 97
OUTSIDE WALL WITH VEILED WOMEN 104
MURAL DECORATIONS, END OF A HOUSE 121
BUDDHIST MONKS AND MOURNERS 140
RETURNING FROM WASHING 155
DANCING GIRLS (two) 179
BUDDHIST SHRINE 188
VILLAGE IDOLS 198
WORKING WITH SHOVEL 204
GRAIN-SHOP 211
MURAL DECORATIONS 219
GREAT EAST GATE 235
WEST GATE 246
GATE OUTSIDE CITY 254
GREAT SOUTH GATE 266
SEDAN CHAIR AND ATTENDANTS 281
SCENE IN OLD PALACE GROUNDS 307
MAIN PALACE ENTRANCE 316

Digitized by Google

KOREA FROM ITS CAPITAL.

CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY.

WHEN the writer of this first signified to a college friend his intention of going to Korea, that friend replied, "I have a vague recollection that there is such a place somewhere on the eastern coast of Asia, but I must get down my atlas and definitely settle its location in my mind." Geographical knowledge is often very vague. Many times people well informed in other respects have asked how I liked it "down there" or "up there," and the question has often arisen how such persons would locate the little "hermit kingdom" on a globe. People have a "general idea" of a place, and so a word or two as to the location may not be amiss to particularize the position of Korea.

The most direct way of going to the country—a description of which will settle its geographical position—is either by way of San Francisco or Vancouver. Taking ship at San Francisco, we sail almost directly west, southing just a trifle, and so run into the harbor of

Digitized by Google

Yokohama, Japan. Now, if the steamer could push on through the Japanese Islands, as we have supposed it to do through the waves of the Pacific, we should after leaving them run into a peninsula jutting out from the east coast of Asia toward the south-east. This peninsula is the country of which we are speaking. It stretches from about 43° to 34° north latitude, and from 124° 30′ to 130° 30′ east longitude. Looked at from the United States, it is directly behind Japan, and is protected by the Japanese Islands from the waves of the Pacific. Lying as it does between the Yellow and Japan Seas, it feels the effect of the great equalizer of temperature, and its climate is one which makes no severe drafts on the vitality of the inhabitant.

This little country of Korea, or, as the natives call it, Cho Son, the "Land of Morning Calm," whose king is the "monarch of ten thousand isles," has unique claims on the interest of Occidentals, and especially on that of Americans. Dr. Griffis struck the key-note of this in the title of his most excellent book, *Corea, the Hermit Nation.* The fact that Korea was the last to open its gates for the entrance of foreigners within its boundaries and to permit the contact of an alien civilization is not all that gives it title to this name. What makes valid its right to the appellation "hermit" is rather the persistent exclusion of all foreigners from its territory, going so far as to detain as prisoners within its boundaries mariners shipwrecked on its shores, in order that no news

Digitized by Google

might through them reach other nations to tempt incursions for booty or conquest. The whole world is now open to a Western civilization. Thibet still frets at the visits of curious tourists, but that little corner is only a province of China; while Korea is a nation with autonomy practically complete, and in making treaties with foreign nations it has taken the step which cannot be retracted.

The United States has more than a passing interest in this little country. While the policy of our own government is to abstain from participation in the affairs of other continents, it has done more to give to two nations an impetus toward Western ways than any other government. Its citizens have on this account taken more interest and felt more responsibility for results in Japan and Korea than in any other countries. Japanese and Koreans are both received with greatest kindness in both government and private circles.

It was the expectation of many that when Korea was opened up to the world its people would be found savage, uncouth and forbidding in their manners. Stories from Japan and China had given that impression. People looked to see a race of savages. What must have been their surprise, therefore, to find that not only were the people of Korea not of this description, but that, on the contrary, in no countries in the East, Japan and India not excepted, were foreigners so cordially welcomed, so kindly received and so right royally treated!

Digitized by Google

As one passes along the crowded streets of the capital he has not to elbow his way through by main force or by turning himself "edgewise," as in the thoroughfares of our own cities. The visitor is surprised to find that nearly all natives, when they see other than Koreans coming, turn aside and give the right of way to the newcomer. And this comes not through fear—by this time the people have become accustomed to seeing white faces and dark clothing—nor through contempt or dread of contamination, as in the case of Hindus of high caste, for they look up to Westerners as people of wonderful attainments and surprising ability. The movement is one of native courtesy: the Koreans consider foreigners the *guests* of the country, and as such to be treated with all courtesy. Similarly, when the king takes an outing in state, and a parade takes place which corresponds in the minds of Koreans to the shows Barnum gives in the streets of our large cities, crowds flock to see the sights, and line the streets six or eight deep. At such times, if the cry goes up, "Here comes a foreigner!" a passage is opened for the lucky man, and he can walk through and take a front seat without the slightest murmur or protest from any of the parties. The only exception to this is perhaps the case of a countryman from the backwoods, who is as much the butt of jokes for metropolitans in Korea as in our own land, and who bears a name corresponding to our "country bumpkin." Such a person may be so engaged in star-

Digitized by Google

ing at, mayhap, the first foreigner he has seen, that he forgets his manners, and is very likely reminded by the shouts and laughter of other passers-by that he is doing himself no credit by his strange action.

The question, therefore, naturally arises, If this is the disposition of the inhabitants, if they are so universally courteous and kind, how shall we explain the policy of isolation which was so persistently adhered to till within eight years—a policy which refused to the Chinese, who claimed suzerainty over Korea, the right to a resident, and even compelled an ambassador from the Emperor of China, on the rare occasions when one made a visit, to enter the country with only the scantiest train of attendants? The answer to this, as to many other questions which will arise, lies in the geographical position of the peninsula between China and Japan.

The history of Korea is a peculiarly checkered one. Were we to trace it, the one fact which would stand out before us is the frequent invasions from China on the north and Japan on the south. While the Chinese time and again attempted the subjugation of the peninsula, occasionally succeeding, and for a time adding it as a province to China, only to find the national life rising again, unweakened by terrible disaster, the Japanese have held from the second century of our era that Korea was a part of Japan. The consequence was that hordes sometimes reckoned at a million of men were sent like tidal-waves from China, carrying devas-

Digitized by Google

tation in their wake. And again from the south the sturdy and brave soldiers of Japan (and there are no better fighters in the world to-day than the Japanese) overran the peninsula far toward the north. And not only this: we find the Chinese and the Japanese, whose hate for each other has ever been deadly (nothing would be more popular to-day among the masses in Japan than a war with China, in which, if fought on anything like equal terms as to position, victory would almost surely rest with Japan), fighting out their battles on Korean soil. To this there must be added the incursions of pirates from the Japan coast and islands, who, during long periods when the government of their own country was too weak or too much engaged in other things to repress them, ravaged the coasts of Korea, burned the cities and kept the inhabitants of the peninsula in a state of constant fear. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Koreans reasoned thus: "If our own cousins, those of Mongolian origin, the people of straight black hair, oblique eyes and yellow skin, treat us in this fashion; if they know no use for us but to burn our cities, plunder our territory and kill and capture our people, what must we expect from barbarians of the West? We'll none of them." And so, isolated from all that she could keep out, rejecting all overtures, destroying, so far as possible, all news that might reach the outside world concerning herself, she lived in content, shut in and confined to her own resources, until the next to the

Digitized by Google

last decade of the nineteenth century only has seen treaties made with Western powers. Of course we are not to forget that a start was made in the direction of opening up the ports of Korea when, in 1876, a treaty was made with the Japanese. This was not such a strange departure. Communications between Japan and Korea were not new. The nature of the relations between the two countries had often been practically that of allied powers. But that year was a significant one for Korea. By it Japan once for all gave up her claims to the peninsula. In making a treaty the Japanese government acknowledged the independence of the sister country, and it is to be hoped that Koreans will come to understand what a great step was taken when this was done, and that their gratitude to Japan will lead them to regard the Japanese as their friends far more than they do at present. The chief significance of this treaty, however, is in its opening a port of the hermit nation to trade with the Japanese. The hermit condition was by this act abandoned. The way was paved for other nations to ask the same with some reasonable ground of expectation that it would be granted. After several futile attempts on the part of the United States and other powers, a treaty with the United States was negotiated in 1882, Commodore, now Admiral, Shufeldt representing this country. Soon treaties followed with England, Russia, Italy and France, and the hermit nation is a hermit no longer. The world is watch-

Digitized by Google

ture served by art beautifying the landscape, sprightliness, wit and grace, all abound in Japan, and with all there is to be seen an inherent politeness in the people that bestows additional charms upon all besides. In the Korean peninsula faces appear dull, costumes repeating each other grow monotonous, houses are poor and without adornment, agriculture is less skillfully carried on, and landscape gardening is unknown, the exceptions being crude attempts at the graves of the nobility, and the people gaze with open mouth at any unusual sight, and seem at times bereft even of mother-wit. There is this, then, to be said: only as one comes to know the people, to get into their confidence, to see their readiness to appreciate our advantages over them, and to become aware of the fact that there is good material in both country and people, does the possible value of Korea to the world become manifest. Korea is not the country for tourists. Its main title to the attention of the curious is that it has so recently become possible to see it at all.

In its physical features Korea much resembles Japan. It is very mountainous, though the mountains nowhere reach a great height. The backbone of the peninsula, like the Pyrenees of Italy, runs rather nearer to the north-eastern side. From this spurs reach out and run toward the seas. The structure of the ground has a marked character at about the middle of the peninsula. There is one place where one can look toward the south

Digitized by Google

and see a soil composed of decomposed granite, while to the north is seen that peculiar shade marking a limestone formation. The valleys are fertile, but, as the country is not so densely settled as in Japan, we miss here the terraces on the hills, carrying up agriculture to their crowns. The hills have been denuded of forests except far toward the north and in the west, and so they stand bleak and bare or with a stunted growth of crooked pine, sometimes covered with brush, yet in the early spring radiant with the pink and white and magenta bloom of the oleander. For the most part these hills are seamed and scarred and furrowed by the gullies the rain has made, and at no season and in no part of the country is the eye relieved, as in Japan, with alternating scenes of cultivation and carefully-cherished woodland.

The shores are protected by clusters and chains of islands, some mere rocks, others beautiful with grass and flower. The south-western coast has several nooks which might be available as harbors, but navigation of these coasts is difficult and dangerous. Hidden rocks abound; fogs are frequent and dense. The tides rise and fall twenty-eight to thirty feet, causing eddies and whirls which perplex the sailor and cause him no little trouble. At low tide vast mud-flats lie uncovered, and rocks appear which reveal to the tourist how carefully approaching vessels must pick their way.

The climate of the capital, which is in the latitude of

Digitized by Google

Richmond, Virginia, is delightful except for about six weeks in midsummer. Those sudden alternations of heat and cold which mark the climate of New York, and are so perplexing to the inhabitant, are unknown there. Snow often lies on the ground from the middle of December to the middle of February, but at no time does the cold become unbearable. I have never seen the thermometer below zero, though for nearly a month the mercury in a sheltered place did not vary 15°, running from about 5° to 20°. Thus there is in midwinter a level of cold. About February 1 the mercury begins to rise, until by March 15 people are making gardens. The temperature continues to rise till about July 15, when the summer level of about 90° is reached, with, however, but few nights when the heat makes sleeping difficult. This is the rainy season. And how it rains! Apparently the water falls in sheets. Clouds roll across and drop their loads, and then roll back and double their contribution. Not steadily, but often a day or two of fine weather succeeds a day or two of successive, almost continuous, showers, and then, by September 1, the magnificent autumn weather commences. This is the crown of the year. Delightful days, bright and sunny temperature, almost imperceptibly falling, so that tennis is played sometimes till December 15. I have played tennis on December 16 (though active work was necessary for comfort), and gone skating on Christmas. Thus there seem no unusual drafts on the resi-

Digitized by Google

dents' strength, and, with the care necessary in the East regarding exposure to the sun and the boiling of water for drinking purposes, life seems as secure in Korea, and certainly as pleasant, as in our own beloved United States.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

THE GOVERNMENT.

IN this chapter we shall deal with the composition and internal administration of the Korean government. The relations of the country to the neighboring nations will demand a separate chapter.

Power centres in the king, or *hapmun*, or *ingum*, as he is called by the people. The functions of government are all exercised in his name by ministers appointed presumably by him and acting under his authority. The people have no share in the government, and no authority proceeds from them. In Cho Son truly "le roi est l'état." From the king, therefore, power filters through a line of officials down to the head man of the smallest village, each official requiring of those beneath him an account for whatever transpires in his own jurisdiction.

Two wrong inferences might be drawn from this by those unacquainted with the country: first, that the people have only to submit, no matter what the character of the government; and second, that the type of administration depends on the character and disposition of each monarch. One of the surprises a watch-

Digitized by Google

ful resident in the country meets is the influence of the people on the government. Although the people have no voice in the selection of officers, and no direct way of influencing the actions of the government, yet when measures distasteful to the mass of the inhabitants have been decided on there is what might be called a popular protest entered by the mass of citizens, taking shape in a sort of foment, at first unnoticeable, but, as discussion widens, increasing in degree until a state of excitement ensues, when business is neglected, what might be called mass-meetings are held, and the news gets to the palace that the people are displeased. So far as I could learn —and the phenomena under discussion appeared several times during my residence in Korea—these popular protests, if founded in right, were effective in producing a change in the policy. If, however, the excitement was caused by false rumors, if mischief-makers had circulated false reports, and, owing to these, misapprehensions were abroad, the usual course was for proclamations to be posted in what corresponds to the Wall street or City-Hall square of the metropolis, correcting the misunderstanding and advising the people to return to their occupations. If, however, this was not effective, as was sometimes the case, a second proclamation was issued, in a different tone. The tenor of the first proclamation may be gentle and fatherly; that of the second sterner, and giving the impression that "business is meant." Generally a day or two is allowed for

Digitized by Google

this to have its effect, when, if the excitement does not subside, the military are put into service, the streets patrolled, disturbers of the peace arrested and punished, and so the trouble is settled. Thus the populace have a way of making their wishes known and their power felt even to the heart of the palace. Of course, inasmuch as the Korean army is recruited from the people, a feeling of dissatisfaction which is well grounded among the people has more or less force among the soldiers. The consequence is that it is difficult to control an outbreak if the discontent has its basis on a real grievance. The national conscience seems to have more weight with both sides, the rulers and the governed, than is generally the case in an absolute monarchy.

The individual peculiarities of each monarch have less influence on the character of the administration of the government than we should suppose. We might expect that in a despotism untrammeled by a constitution each ruler would make his individuality felt to the very limit of the kingdom. But it will be found that in countries dominated (as is Korea) by Confucianism there are, in lieu of a constitution, certain traditional limits within which the people may walk and which the rulers may not transgress. It is significant in this connection that the same two words *pop* and *kyou-mo* mean both "law" and "custom." In other words, while the king and officials are restrained by no written constitution, there is a tradition or custom of dealing with offences, which is

Digitized by Google

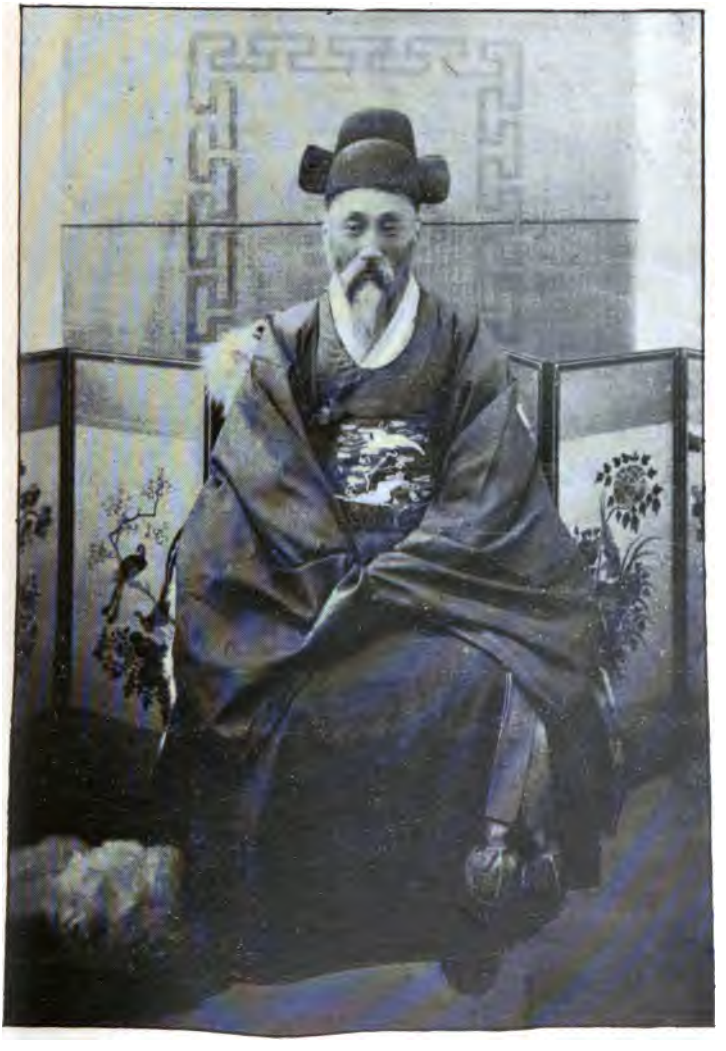
binding, and a transgression of which constitutes ground for appealing from judicial decisions. Dominated thus by the custom of the country, rulers of provinces, of towns and of villages are less controlled by the king's individuality than might otherwise be the case. As a matter of fact, the government in each locality depends far more on the character of the head of that province, town or village than does that of the whole realm on the qualities of the king. The good aims and upright intentions of His Majesty may be, and generally are, to a great extent nullified by the cupidity and worthlessness of his officials. The poverty of the people at large speaks volumes for the venality and inordinate desire of the governing class. The king has as his immediate counselors and assistants three men who are called the "prime minister" and ministers of the "right" and the "left." These three are the chief men in the kingdom, and outrank all others. After these come the heads of the departments, six in number. These are assisted by numerous officials with rank running all the way down to the pettiest official, ranking perhaps with our country constable. The whole matter of "rank" or *pessal* is so intricate that without an understanding of it anything like a comprehension of the system of government is impossible. There are in Korea two kinds of rank, civil and military (Korea has no navy). Of these the higher is the civil. The highest civil rank next to that of the prime minister bears the native name

Digitized by Google

of *chai-sin* or *chŏng-seung*. This rank is possessed only by the two assistants of the minister. The next rank to this is *pan-sah*, of whom there are only a limited number in the kingdom. Below this is the rank of *cham-pan*. Next comes *cham-way*, and then those of *chu-sah* and *chu-sŏ*, of which there are nineteen or twenty grades. As we shall have very little to say of the military establishment, it will not be necessary to give the names of the grades in that service. It may be said, however, that there are in the capital four battalions, named from the approximate positions of their barracks or stations with regard to the palace—those of the east, south, north and west, each commanded by a general or *tae-jang*. From the ranks of the *pansahs* or *champans* are usually selected the governors of the provinces, called *kam-sah*, and the heads of the departments (*kyei-jang*) in the capital are of this rank. So foreigners going to the *wae-yamen* or foreign office find the head officers *pansahs*. Detailed to assist them are *chamways*, who may become governors of provinces. The men of lower rank are detailed to lower and less important duties in the departments, while the chief judges of cities are taken from the ranks of the *pansah* and two lower grades.

The etiquette between these different ranks and the people in general will be treated of separately. What the reader must now understand is that these various ranks are *grades* of office-holders, one separated from

Digitized by Google



Mandarin in Court Dress. **Page 27.**

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

another with the finest discrimination. Moreover, when a man, by passing examination, gets "rank," he becomes an office-holder; so that all "men of rank" are office-holders. A man of the people becomes thereby a "nobleman" or a "gentleman." Here again the language illustrates, for one word for nobleman is *pessal hanani*, or "rank-having," while the same word *pessal* serves for "rank" and for "office." Their position with reference to the body of the people is indicated by another word, *nopheun*, or "high one." It should be mentioned, however, that men of high military rank are often detailed to service in connection with civil departments. Thus the first president of the board of education, with which the author was connected, was a general who stood very near the head of the kingdom, and is reported to be a cousin of the queen. A man on becoming an office-holder is assigned to some duty, and is thereupon in the line of promotion. He is supposed to get his pickings at the public crib, and the people at large furnish the fodder.

With all these ramifications of rank it ought to be an easy matter to secure responsibility and good government. But, unfortunately, the possession of official position makes it possible to oppress the people with but little danger of punishment following. There seems to be a tacit agreement among the nobility to suppress any attempt on the part of the common people to carry any information against one official to another.

Digitized by Google

The sumptuary laws are certainly defective. There is an indisposition among the people to lay up for a rainy day. While we were in the country our own cook was becoming quite a wealthy man. He had bought two houses, and had besides a little ready money, but he informed me that he always wanted to work for foreigners. On being asked for the reason, he said that were he not in the employ of foreigners, he would be immediately sought by some of the officials for the purpose of *loaning* them thirty or forty thousand cash (about twenty-five dollars). As this loan would of course never be returned, it would amount to a levy on his property. So long as he was employed by Americans, he, in accordance with treaty stipulations in such a case, could not be arrested except through our own consulate, and was consequently safe from the exactions of the petty officials. It became very clear to me that such was a very usual method of procedure in Korea. If it became known that a man had laid up an amount of cash, an official would seek a loan. If it were refused, the man would be thrown into prison on some trumped-up charge. The supposed criminal would be whipped every morning until he had met the demands or had by his obstinacy scared the officials into apprehension for their own safety, or until some of his relations had paid the amount demanded, or some compromise had been made.

But this is not the only method of obtaining money.

Digitized by Google

By custom (or law), not only a person contracting a debt, but even his relations, are responsible for its payment. The filching officials often take advantage of this, and, not being able or not daring to arrest the moneyed member of the family, will arrest a cousin or brother, and then demand payment. When the unfortunate fellow protests that he has no money, and cannot possibly pay, the officers will coolly retort, "Oh, well, we know that. But your cousin has plenty. Get him to pay your fine." So close are the bonds of family relationship that this method is usually effectual.

Unfortunately, these abuses of power are not confined to extortion of money. One of the saddest cases which came under my observation was the following: I was called out one morning by one of the servants, who said that a man from the country wished to see me. It should be premised here that a notion had gained currency that foreigners were very influential with the government. This countryman had heard this rumor, and so came to lay his cause before me and to seek my help. It appeared that he had been married not a long time. He and his wife had occasion to make a journey, and as they passed the house of a *yang-ban* ("gentleman"!) near his own village the latter's servants had rushed out, seized the woman, and had kept her shut up and at the "gentleman's" service. Her husband had sought her release at the

Digitized by Google

hands of such officials as he could reach, but they had not dared to move in the matter, as the man whose servants had committed the outrage was very influential, and his position screened him and prevented others from seeking the punishment even of his servants. Of course the man's story aroused my indignation and enlisted my sympathies, but, unfortunately, I did not possess the influence attributed to me, and, besides that, the interests of our school, and through that of the advance of civilization in Korea, might have been jeoparded by interference in matters in which I was not properly concerned. The outcome I never learned. I could only send the man, in company with a soldier, to the president of the educational board, and ask him to listen to the man's story.

Another case which came to the attention of the teachers in the government school, and which concerned us more immediately, had happier results: There were attached to our school as directors and assistants a number of officials. These were each attended by a numerous retinue of servants, and in addition many of the scholars were also accompanied by attendants. Thus there were collected quite a band of men whose interests were common and who were ready for almost any imposition. Our advent had been watched for by the community with a good deal of interest. We had come under the best auspices. It was known that the government was at our back,

Digitized by Google

and so we were favorably regarded by the community. After our work had proceeded for some time we were surprised to find that people began to look with less favor on us. Black looks were cast at us as we passed to and fro. Finally there came to us the news that a fight had taken place in the street near the school-house, caused by the abduction of a woman from her husband and her confinement in an outhouse where the servants congregated. We soon learned, by a searching investigation, that not only had this been done, but that forced loans had been levied on the neighborhood by the servants referred to above, who had asserted that this had been done with our knowledge and consent, and that we *shared*. We immediately summoned the officers of the school and laid the matter before them. We assumed, of course, that the thing had been done without their knowledge, although we were morally certain that at least one of the under officials had profited by the scheme, but we told them that no such course would be permitted, and intimated that unless such doings ceased immediately we should, through our minister, acquaint His Majesty with what was going on. We also informed the scholars that while they might not have known of the proceedings, we should hereafter hold them responsible for the correct behavior of their servants. These vigorous and uncompromising steps showed them that we were in earnest, and effectually broke up the practice in our

Digitized by Google

neighborhood. If such doings could be practiced in the capital, almost under the walls of the palace, it can be surmised how hard may be the lot of poor people away in the provinces, entirely at the mercy of unscrupulous and rapacious officials upon whom there is little or no check.

Hence, when travelers return and speak of the poverty and indolence of the Koreans, it must not be taken for granted that this is the result of their temperament. It must be remembered that the people have no incentive to labor. The fact that men in the employ of foreigners have shown commendable zeal in laying up stores for a needy time while they were practically under the jurisdiction of an American consul, and so in no danger of oppression from their officials, is proof that their laziness is not innate, but results from the apathy caused by a knowledge that all fruit of toil above what is required for the veriest necessities is liable to be stolen from them by corrupt and insatiate officials against whom they are powerless.

Appeals to the supreme power are exceedingly difficult from the fact, already mentioned, that officials are chary of listening to complaints against one of their number. So it is a very rare occurrence for His Majesty to hear of the wrongdoings of his subordinates. Besides this, there is a custom among them that the king must hear no unpleasant news if it is

Digitized by Google

possible to prevent such reaching him. Of course, when wrong has been done a man of another nationality, the wrong comes to the king's ear through diplomatic or consular channels, and then punishment is swift and sure. Thus, during my residence in the country it happened that a friend of the president of the foreign office had borrowed money of a Japanese, and the president had gone on the man's bond. Money bears five to six per cent. interest per month in Korea, and as the debt was not paid it accumulated so fast that soon the minister was unable to pay. The Japanese appealed to His Majesty through his consul, and the result was that Kim Yum Sik, the president of the foreign office and one of the highest and best-known officials in the country, was stripped of his rank and dignities and banished to a distant province. The old man laughingly said to a foreigner, "Oh, I'll soon be back," meaning that he would be recalled; but in that he was mistaken, as the king was seriously displeased, and apparently has forgotten all about him, leaving him in exile.

But not only in the ways indicated above do officials abuse their power. There is besides a great deal of nepotism in the ranks. It is a fact that the sons of high officials are invariably, before reaching the age of maturity, well advanced in official position. Thus among the scholars in the school we had one who, being the son of a deceased prime minister, had, before reaching the

Digitized by Google

age of twenty-six, gained the rank of *cham-way*, an exceedingly elevated rank for so young a man. We had another student, the son of one of the prime ministers, who, though under eighteen, had already reached one of the highest grades of *chu-sŏ*. The case of this young man was a remarkable one. He was very bright, and his abilities were unusually good. But he was lazy, and as soon as the novelty of his study of English wore off he became remiss and paid almost no attention to his work. The consequence was that when he came to an examination before the king he was totally unprepared. The officials were, however, equal to the occasion, for the son of so high an official must not fail. Special examination books had been prepared, and each scholar had been given his page and told to prepare it. It was expected that thus the scholars would go through swimmingly. One thing they had overlooked, however, and that was that the king might submit the examination to the teachers' judgment. In fact, this was what happened, as His Majesty asked the teachers how each scholar had done, so that we were able to give to each scholar the grade his work had earned. The son of the prime minister, learning what was going on, sent first the scholars, and afterward one of the board of education, to plead with us to allow him to take a high grade, on the plea that his father was a prime minister. Our reply was that his father's position made no difference in the matter at issue, and every mistake he made

Digitized by Google

would be counted against him. The consequence was that the young man went into the very lowest division, and lost much prestige. Yet it was the purpose of the school officials to have him pass as a fine scholar in English, and so gain an advance in official position.

It is a fact well known in Korea that while examinations* are held with the purpose of finding scholars who are capable of taking part in the administration of government, these scholars were most frequently found among the sons of officials. The examiners, having received a bribe, can easily find the paper of the briber, and by ostentatiously showing it to His Majesty gain for the writer the coveted honor.

My own teacher, an exceptionally honorable as well as well-read man, told me that he would very much like to obtain rank, but said he could not do so, as he had not the money or the influence necessary. Asking how it was that either was necessary when the examination was held to find ability, he said, "Very true; but very many papers are written. The king sees only a few, and those are selected by the assistants of His Majesty. If I knew one of these men, I might *persuade him to see* my paper and show it, or I might brighten his eyes with some cash." Asking him how much cash would be needed, he said, "Oh, perhaps a hundred thousand" (about fifty dollars). I then said, "Suppose I should offer to lend you that amount?" To this his reply was,

* See chapter on language and literature.

Digitized by Google

"You are very kind, and I appreciate your offer, but it is not according to my conscience to get rank in that way."

In short, after allowing for the superior abilities and education arising from association with cultivated classes, when we come to take note of the number who compete in all examinations (often over one thousand competitors appearing at a single one), and also when we take cognizance of the wide diffusion of knowledge of the Chinese classics, we cannot but agree with the scholar quoted, that cash does "brighten the eyes" and open them to merit. The skill with which civil service examinations are evaded in Korea might well awaken the admiration of political heelers in our own land.

The divinity which doth hedge a king is in many respects a hindrance to the advancement of the king's own wishes. It often prevents his knowing things which it were better he knew. It is true he is an autocrat, and that he may order instant death upon any of his subjects. It is true that those found guilty of peculation or of malfeasance in office are degraded and severely punished. But this does not hinder gifts and moneys which emanate from the palace and are sent by His Majesty's order from being appropriated in greater or less quantities by the officials through whose hands they pass. Thus, two months after our arrival it was supposed by the king that the buildings for the royal school and the teachers' houses had been completed, and

Digitized by Google

that the scholars had been assembled and put to work. This was evinced by a present of fans being ordered for the scholars during the hot weather. There being no scholars in the school at that time, said fans were almost certainly appropriated to the use of the official in charge. There was no check on the matter, though doubtless had the affair come to the king's ears, some one would have been severely punished. Among the presents sent to those in the government service things quite frequently appeared which were certainly not worth receiving, but no one supposed that such gifts were ordered to be sent. Good gifts were intended, and probably were taken from the storehouse, but they had been exchanged, and the difference was appropriated by some one.

A picture of the parade which attends official life is given by Mr. Foulk, late lieutenant in the United States navy, and may be found, with much other interesting matter, in "Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, transmitted to Congress Dec. 8, 1885," Washington, 1886, pp. 319–23:

"About the courts of the *yong mun* (official residence) is at all times a great crowd of attendants, police runners and soldiers in coarse uniforms of variegated colors indicating their position. These pass the orders of the great man within in long-drawn shrill cries heard long distances away from the *yong mun*; they come and go, carrying and bringing messages. Squatting with heads close to the ground, they speak in stage tones to the

Digitized by Google

officer in the high place within from morning to night, at both of which times, at the opening and closing of the gates, there is a great noise of drums, of shrill fifes and of weird cries; all seems bustle and confusion, believed to be necessary to the dignity of the officers. I was assigned to a *kilchung* or guest-house, off the main court-yard. This, like all official houses I have seen, was in general arrangement like that of the governor. A host of braves were detailed to provide for me. Their attentions were painful in time. If I tried to nap, the word went forth, 'The great man (*tai-in*) sleeps; be still,' and in a little time a continuous wrangle and racket began, preventing all sleep, in the efforts of the braves to keep each other quiet, and thrashing vigorously the citizens who came to get a peep at the foreigner. Meals appeared six times the first day, seven the second, and at short intervals during the day an officer appeared to ask if I had eaten well, and, if so, to thank me."

Enough has been said to show that not the least of the drawbacks the hermit kingdom has to battle with is the cupidity and incapacity of her governors and rulers. In the administration there is a strange combination of shrewdness, weak puerility and indecision which is decidedly Oriental.

The opening of the country to trade necessitated the adoption of customs regulations, and nothing better could have been done than what soon after took effect, viz.: the collection of customs was placed under the adminis-

Digitized by Google

tration of the Chinese service, then under the direction of Sir Henry Parkes. This ensured a faithful and careful handling of the customs, and at the present time the customs service of Korea is really a part of the customs service of China, though no part of the duties collected goes into the Chinese treasury. All surplus remaining over the cost of administering the service goes into the Korean treasury. This surplus is increasing each year, and the government is deriving a considerable sum from this source.

The government derives some revenue from the raising of silk, and so an expert was engaged to look after the cultivation of the silk-worm. This became a burden on the government's hands, for after an engagement of about five years the expert has left his position, the only result of his years' service to the government being some small mulberry orchards of sickly growth; and probably not a dollar has come or will come to repay the thousands of dollars expended in his services and in the planting of the orchard. Another act of the government was the establishment of a mint in the capital. This had to be built almost entirely by foreign labor, which is of course costly. Two experts were engaged to oversee the setting up of the machinery. This last was of the most costly kind, and some of the pieces of mechanism are spoken of as being the best and most delicate to be had. This has been completed now for over two years, and the only use thus far made of the

Digitized by Google

plant, which cost nearly two hundred thousand dollars, has been to run a few sample coppers through to show His Majesty what it could do. Yet the native mints, manufacturing tediously and slowly the copper cash of the country, remain in operation, sometimes working night and day to turn out the medium of exchange. Thus the machinery which cost so much is rusting away, and will doubtless soon be utterly useless. A lack of judgment as to what is needed here has caused the sinking of what to the Korean government is a large sum of money.

In the neighborhood of Ping Yang are some fine deposits of excellent coal, cropping out and running near the surface of the ground. The government, with that jealousy of allowing control to rest in foreigners' hands which is seen in China and Japan, has refused to make contracts with foreign syndicates to get out this coal. They have, however, bought mining machinery, intending to have it set up under foreign direction and then mine the coal themselves. Under foreign management the working of these mines would bring in a very large revenue. As the case stands, the mines are worked only to a small extent, and that in a most wasteful manner. The machinery is scattered all over the country, unprotected and rusting away, while the burrs, nuts and all detachable parts are being stolen and sold for the copper or other metal that is in them. Here is another evidence of the incapacity for properly administering affairs,

Digitized by Google

and of the absence of judgment as to the best interests of the country.

One other example of this shall suffice: the Korean army is naturally very small. There has been an effort made to increase its efficiency. Now, Korea is in a peculiar position. She is sandwiched in between Japan and China, two very strong nations. She therefore needs either a very strong and exceedingly well-equipped army, so as to present at least a show of resistance in case of attack, or else she must have an army simply for police duty, and rely for safety on the fact that her autonomy is a necessity to both countries, and so leave to them the task of defending her from imposition.

But in 1888, no less than four officers, three from the United States and one from Japan, were called in, and contracts were made with them, calling for salaries of $1100 a month, to train a corps of cadets, and so to extend instruction to the four thousand troops or so in the capital. But after these men had come and had attempted to begin work, they found themselves hampered and harassed so that they could accomplish nothing. Add to this the fact that their salaries were for months not forthcoming, and it will be seen that this venture was one of disaster for all concerned. Hardly any instruction has been given, money has been expended in a change of uniforms, and but little real benefit has resulted from the engagement of these gen-

Digitized by Google

tlemen. There might be added to these miscarriages a powder-mill which makes no powder and a farm which produces no crops. But the fountain of all these troubles lies in the non-perception by the government that enterprises of such character as those mentioned, if undertaken at all, must be carried through energetically and worked for all there is in them.

Each of the enterprises mentioned above, except that of the army improvement, might have done well and have brought good returns. But they all stopped short of thoroughness, of actual use.

Perhaps the root of the whole matter lies here: the king has had a "foreign adviser," a gentleman whose competency has not been seriously called in question. This gentleman has advised against these various enterprises. He has argued that they should be entered upon later—not until the government was in a position to follow them up and derive benefit from them. To this gentleman has been paid a salary of $1000 a month to give advice upon which the government would not act. The jealousy toward foreigners which hampers all such as engage with the Korean government, and which happily is felt least of all in the best service under the government, viz. the customs, made the employment of this gentleman a farce, the money paid to him a sheer waste, and all the other enterprises of the government pure loss.

The question now is, whether in time the king and

Digitized by Google

his advisers will let common sense in these matters guide them; whether they will take the advice of a "foreign adviser;" and whether they will not intrust to those foreigners whom they engage the full control of matters they are under contract to manage, and so secure the end which they are seeking. If they are content to let competent men direct such matters, the finances of the kingdom and the government itself can soon be put in excellent condition.

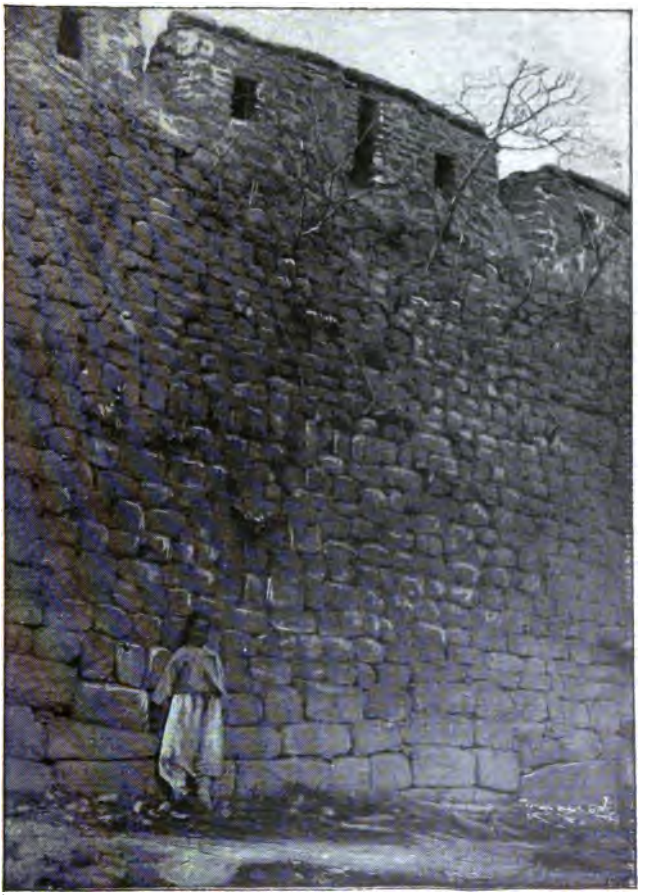
Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

THE CAPITAL.

WE are accustomed to speak of the capital of Korea as "Seoul," supposing that to be the name of the town. Really that word means "the capital," and the name of the capital is Kyung-gi-do or Kyung-gi. Truly one may say of Seoul that the capital is the state. The first impression one receives on passing a night there is that somehow he has taken the place of Mark Twain's Yankee in King Arthur's court. It has a decided mediæval flavor to find one's self in a walled town with the gates shut, going about after dark with lantern in hand in streets otherwise unlighted and quite deserted by men, with no possibility of exit except by scaling the walls. The capital of Korea, occupying in that peninsula a position much like that of Rome in Italy, about twenty-eight miles from its port on the south-west coast, is a town estimated to contain 250,000 to 400,000 inhabitants, including those villages clustered on the outside beneath the walls. The city proper is enclosed by a wall ranging from twenty-two to thirty feet in height, forming approximately a square with a perimeter of ten miles. This wall is made of squared

Digitized by Google



City Wall. Page 45.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

stones set loosely together in some parts, in others joined with great nicety. It scales in its circuit two hills, one of them about eight hundred, the other one thousand feet in height. The masonry is about three feet thick at the bottom, sloping to a thickness of less than two feet at the top, and is surmounted by a coping. The top is battlemented and pierced with embrasures, not, however, for cannon, but for bowmen. On the inside the walls are faced with a mound of earth six to ten feet thick at the top, which is carried up to within four feet of the top of the wall, and this of course forms a vantage-ground for the defenders of the city in case of assault. In time of peace there is here a pleasant promenade, except where the wall passes over crags, in which places the climbing is difficult and requires a steady head. The excellence of the construction of this wall will be understood when it is known that it has been built about five hundred years and is now in excellent repair except in a few places. It has not, however, a smooth surface, but can be scaled at very many points, and at intervals the slope is so great that there are found well-worn traces where late arrivals habitually enter or leave the city between the times of closing and opening the gates. In some few places the top of the wall is broken, but not so as seriously to impair its defensive value. This wall, following the curves of the hills and the inequalities of the surface so as to take advantage of the defensive capabilities, is pierced by eight

Digitized by Google

gates, one of which is secret, leading by a hidden path to the fortress of Pook Hon, and is for the purpose of affording the king escape in times of danger. The road could then very speedily be destroyed behind him, in one of the defiles, so as to make pursuit impossible. These gates are all, with one exception, placed at the apex of re-entrant angles, so that assailants would have to submit to flank fire as they pressed to the assault. The exception referred to is guarded by a secondary wall projecting from the main one on the arc of a circle, and run in front of the gate in such a way that assailants on that side would have to march several rods through a passage about twenty feet wide with flanks exposed to a raking fire, while the narrow space would allow but little opportunity for retaliation. These gates, about fourteen to sixteen feet in width, are set in arches about sixteen feet deep and made of large blocks of stone finely hewn and joined, which furnish as perfect specimens of arch-building as can be seen in any country. These arches are the most substantial works to be seen in the country. The gates themselves are but sorry affairs in comparison with the strong wall and the magnificent arches. They are made of wood about three inches thick, each side covered with a layer of iron perhaps one-quarter to three-eighths of an inch thick, and fold to the centre, being fastened by clumsy locks so massive that one of them is a heavy burden for a coolie. They are surmounted by typical structures of

Digitized by Google

wood, two of them two stories in height, the others one story only. These are meant as posts for detachments to defend the approaches, and they make the gates very picturesque objects and the sure cynosure of the tourist's lens. While the walls, and especially the arches, would endure the assault of quite heavy artillery, a five-pounder or even a gatling gun would riddle the gates.

Inside the walls, the impression of mediævalism received on looking at a city begirt with massive walls after the fashion of the thirteenth century is by no means removed. The visitor finds that there are but three wide streets in Seoul. One of these almost traverses the city from east to west, ending at the great east gate. The others run off at right angles from this, one of them to the main gates of the palace, and the other to the great south gate. Only one of these is kept clear so that its entire width can be seen at all times—viz., the one leading to the palace. On the others booths and shops are built out, so that only a narrow way wide enough for ox-carts is left. On certain occasions, to be referred to later, these booths are removed, and the width of these streets as originally laid out comes into sight. All the other streets are narrow and winding, and in many of them it is barely possible for men on foot to squeeze past each other. A closer investigation, however, shows that as originally laid out the streets were not so contracted. Gradually

Digitized by Google

the owners on each side of the way have encroached on the road, building farther and farther out, acquiring rights by squatter's sovereignty, so to speak, and, having been left undisturbed, have come to own the public way and have almost closed it up. Through these streets, owing to their narrowness and to the projecting thatch and tiling of the roofs, a single mounted man often finds it difficult to ride, and must pass carefully along, bowing his head and swaying in his saddle, to avoid being swept from his seat.

There is ample evidence that once a passable sewerage-system was provided. Through almost the centre of the town passes an open conduit, walled on the sides, expanding in width from six to twenty-five feet, and still about four feet in depth (it is now silted up with sand and filth), which is the main sewer of the city. Into this smaller channels throughout the city empty, and through it the drainage of the whole city is carried off during the rainy season. A description of the lay of the city will show how susceptible it is of a good drainage-system, and how easily, under proper direction, the capital might be made one of the healthiest cities in the world.

The lowest part of the city is a valley through the centre, sloping gradually from west to east, and leading to a deeper depression conducting to the Hau River, which flows some miles from the town. About the centre of the city, on the south, is a bold, well-wooded and

Digitized by Google

beautiful hill about eight hundred feet in height, rising abruptly from its base, and showing in some spots sheer precipices a hundred feet in height. This is called Nam San, or South Mountain. Diagonally across the city, toward the north-west, is another hill, higher and with a less dense covering of trees, in many places only large bare crags appearing, such as advertisers of patent medicines rejoice to find. This is called Pook San, or North Mountain. The north and north-west sides of the city are terminated by bare rocks shooting up abruptly to a height of three hundred feet, or by hills sloping rapidly down in furrowed masses of disintegrated granite. Thus the drainage of the city is from north, south and west, through the centre of the city toward the east, and thence into the river Han, a stream at all times sufficiently large to carry off and render innocuous all the refuse of even so large a city. A better selected site for a city, from a sanitary standpoint, could hardly be found, and in the plans for carrying off the sewerage the lay of the land was fully appreciated.

The streets as laid out had open ditches serving as sewers, while the centres of streets were raised. But builders encroached on the streets and erected their houses over the sewers, until now there are many houses built entirely in the street, with the sewers running behind the houses.

There are at present three palace enclosures in the city. That occupied at present by the royal family is

Digitized by Google

immediately under the North Mountain, and is enclosed by a wall, exceedingly well built, fifteen feet in height, running at the sides back to the city wall where it climbs the mountain. Another enclosure is one occupied formerly by a regent, afterward used as a mint, and now fallen into a woful state of dilapidation. The grounds are occupied by mulberry groves planted by the government for the fostering of the silk industry. The third, which was until a very few years ago the residence of the royal family, is a large enclosure containing very many pretty buildings now fast falling into decay, and which is of such great extent that there is said to be in the thickets near the back the lair of a tigress and her cubs. There has been some attempt at landscape gardening, but, unfortunately, it is a persistent notion of the Koreans that the grounds about a residence should be cut up by walls, each set of buildings being enclosed and shut off from the rest. The reason of this will be seen when we come to the social life of the Koreans.

The houses of the Koreans may be divided into two classes according to the materials of their roofs of thatch or of tile. The poorer ones are of course thatched. The typical shape of a peasant's hut is that of a horseshoe, with one side resting on the street, and the court in the centre. These houses are separated one from another by high walls, so that a view of a neighbor's yard is impracticable. The houses are of one story, only a few buildings used for stores and shops having two.

Digitized by Google



Enclosure in Palace Grounds.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Koreans do not seem to care for fancy gardening, nor have I ever seen a house with lawns laid out about it. Some cultivate a few flowers, especially the chrysanthemum and hollyhock. The houses of the more wealthy are distinguished by occupying more ground, by being built in a square around a hollow court and by having tiled roofs. Besides this, the grounds are entered through large gates, and contain not only the residence of the owner, but sometimes a great number of small out-buildings which are the homes of the retainers and servants, besides wood-houses and store-houses of various descriptions. The ground is by no means all built up, and there is unoccupied space enough inside the walls to furnish a large portion of the population with food should the city be besieged.

The population of the city is not accurately known. The census is taken by families or households. Consequently the population of the city and suburbs is *estimated* at from 250,000 to 400,000. Probably the former is nearly the correct figure. The streets leading from the great south gate to the central avenue, and the central avenue itself, are the business quarters, and the neighborhood of their intersection is the Commercial Exchange of the city.

It speaks volumes for the orderly character of the people that one sees in the daytime no police. Police duty is done at night by the soldiers, and private watchmen are also engaged, at least by some of the foreigners

Digitized by Google

and by the legations. But there is usually no force on duty in the daytime. Very rarely, except in times of popular excitement, is there to be seen anything that suggests the need of a police force. Very rare indeed is the sight of a man in an uproarious state of intoxication. Not more than two such cases came under my observation during a residence of over two years. Not more than a dozen cases of intoxication in any form met my eye, and these were generally of men lying in a stupor and sleeping off the effects of their potations. Occasionally there would be what corresponded to a fight, the usual method in such cases being for the belligerents to seize each other by the hair and attempt to drag each other about in that way.

Koreans are very susceptible to injury. The theory of Marks in Uncle Tom's Cabin seems to be theirs: "I don't see why I shouldn't take care of my skin: it's the only one I have." They are disposed, therefore, to avoid quarreling. To be sure, the tourist might often imagine a fight or a most provoking discussion going on, for the natives are exceedingly loud in their conversation. A native in amicable discussion will often raise his voice above concert pitch, and frequently, after asking a dealer the price of a measure of peanuts, I have had to tell him that I was not deaf. But life is perfectly safe, not only in the city, but anywhere throughout the country.

Not the least strange of a newly-arrived foreigner's

Digitized by Google

sensations after nightfall is the perfect stillness of the city. After dark the only sounds are the occasional howl of a dog, sometimes awakening responses from all the dogs in the neighborhood, or, in summer, the shrill piping of the frogs (frogs piping in a city of two hundred thousand inhabitants!) or the patter of the ironing-sticks as the housewife smooths out the coat of her lord for the morrow's outing. If the stranger feels the stillness oppressive, and leaves his room for a stroll, he will find a lantern a necessity, for the city is not lighted, and as he looks out over the dwellings he will see but few indications of the existence of the thousands of inhabitants. As he passes through the streets he may see a figure dart hastily through a doorway, as though to be abroad were a misdemeanor, or he may meet a solitary woman, or, mayhap, a little company, at least one of them carrying a lantern, passing quietly along with faces carefully shielded from observation. He may meet the patrol—two soldiers armed with musket or native flint-lock—sauntering in a loose-jointed manner over their rounds, but so silent is the city that his own foot-falls re-echo unpleasantly from the walls, as though he were in a city of the dead. Here and there a door standing ajar will show a group of men in a small room lighted by a rush-light, playing a game very much like go-bang; or perhaps a company listening while one of them sings a solo and they all join in the chorus; or they may take turns in telling delightful

Digitized by Google

little stories, of which there is in Korea a great abundance. After going back to his lodging, if he is entertained where a private watchman is engaged, he may just be sinking into a doze when he will be aroused by a sound entirely new to him—that of a staff with strips of metal fastened loosely upon it, struck sharply on the ground at measured intervals. He may then learn that the custom is for watchmen to carry such a staff, and by striking it on the ground give warning of their approach. Of course a robber is seldom caught; and it always seemed to me that one object of this rattle was to keep up the courage of the watchman. Another sound sometimes heard, even less melodious than the howling of the dogs and more penetrating than the clanking of the patrol's staff, is the bray of a donkey. During our first night in the capital we were entertained in this way, and as the first note of the animal broke upon the ear, and prolonged itself in mournful dolefulness until it seemed as if the beast were nothing but wind and a hole to blow it through, the terror of my wife was equaled only by her disgust when she found what was the source of the noise, and that he was stabled just over the wall. But these noises are only occasional, and impress the more deeply the fact of the peacefulness of the city's rest.

If the visitor wakes early in the morning and takes a walk through the town, he will find the scene transformed; and as he nears the centre of the city the clangor of the morning market will assail his ears; he

Digitized by Google

will find wooden platforms in the middle of the street, covered with dried fish, fruit, greens, rice and all the varied articles composing the Korean's diet, and their owners crying out the virtue of their wares in thorough Western fashion; for the people are early risers, and in summer five to six o'clock is high market-time. By eight o'clock, or very little later, the streets are pretty well cleared of these articles of perishable nature, and then purchases must be made at the stores or booths.

One noticeable feature of the town is the abundance of dogs. As the stranger passes along he will notice that almost every door has a small square hole at the bottom, for every one of which there is at least one cur. The number of these animals is legion, and their behavior is an unending source of amusement to all the foreigners. It is the peculiarity of these dogs that they take not the slightest notice of Koreans along the streets; but let a foreigner approach one of them so engaged as not to see him, and the dog thus caught unawares, upon sight of the interloper, rushes off in the utmost terror, tail tight between its legs, and darts through the hole in the door, almost breaking its back in its anxiety to get to a place of safety. Then, standing at a safe distance from the hole, it barks valiantly as the stranger goes by, and when he has got to a good safe distance, out it comes from its retreat and howls its defiance, the chorus being taken up by all the dogs along the route. Abject fear of foreigners seems

Digitized by Google

to possess all Korean dogs. Time and again I have seen dogs playing together in the street apparently as happy as they could be, and then at sight of me rushing off as if mad, and almost scaling the walls of the houses in their eagerness to escape. They are utter cowards. I have seen only two dogs in Korea which seemed ready to fight. All of them are hideous barkers, but they invariably adopt the precaution of barking from a safe distance. From descriptions of the dogs found with the nomadic tribes of Central Asia it seems likely that they and the Korean dogs are closely related. They are miserable looking creatures, and show that they are but poorly fed. In summer they are an eye-sore because of the swarms of flies which crawl over them and make their wretched life still more unendurable.

The impression of mediævalism will be heightened if the foreigner is in a location whence he can see, about sunset, the summit of Nam San, or the South Mountain, or if he can see the peak of a hill a short distance outside the west gate. The stranger looking at the former hill just before dark on a summer evening (later in the other seasons) will see first one fire, then another, until at least four fires are burning. He will find upon inquiry that these are the terminals of as many series of fires, signaling from the remote provinces that all is well and the kingdom at peace. Immediately the palace bell is rung, and officials go

Digitized by Google

to the palace to report to His Majesty the doings of the day in the several departments of public business. About the same time one near the west gate will find his ears assailed by sounds which are new unless he has visited China. These will be found to proceed from a Korean band at the residence of the governor, just outside the wall, the duty of which is to play an evening seranade. The gates of the city are closed soon after nightfall, at about half-past eight or nine o'clock, no exact time being set. About nine o'clock the strokes of a huge bell near the centre of the town may be heard resounding through the city, deeply and richly resonant if struck in time, and this signal corresponds to the curfew of King John of England, denoting the time for people to retire from the streets. Further notes concerning the customs depending on this will be found in the chapters on the customs and social life of the people.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

THE LANGUAGES.

KOREA is bilingual. Not that two languages are spoken, but that two are used. Thus we find a spoken and a written language, differing in vocabulary, in grammar and in writing, in existence side by side.

The vernacular is a native language exactly like the Japanese in its grammar, but differing from it in vocabulary, excepting only those words which both have borrowed from the Chinese or have derived from a common ancestry. The vernacular is spoken by everybody from the king down. The great difficulty a foreigner finds in acquiring it arises from three sources: its euphonic changes, its honorifics and the fact that there is a Sinico-Korean corresponding to our Latin-English. In its euphony it is like the Sanskrit, from which indeed its alphabet is derived. One who has not had much drill in languages finds this feature a perplexing one, as the roots of verbs are often so modified by the influence of the endings attached and by contraction as to be almost unrecognizable, while in compound nouns one of the elements is often so disguised that few would suspect its origin. The honorifics are at first a most per-

Digitized by Google

plexing detail, and yet a thorough mastery is essential. These are found in the pronouns and in the verbs. Their use is as follows: a Korean official in speaking to a coolie would use what foreigners have agreed to call a "low" form, indicated by the pronoun and by the ending of the verb; but if he were speaking of the king, he would indicate his respect for the king by a different pronoun and by a syllable interpolated between the root of the verb and the ending. If, however, he were speaking to a person who was a little higher in station than a coolie, but not so exalted as himself, and if, at the same time, he wished the person addressed to remember their relative positions, he might use the verb with no ending whatever. When he spoke to an equal, he would use a different ending; and so, if addressing one whom he desired to honor, he would use a termination entirely different from any of the others. As a rule, it may be said that the longer the ending attached to the verb, the greater the respect for the person addressed. A newcomer who has not mastered these difficult points in trying to converse is apt to confuse his endings; and it has happened that when a host wished courteously to invite a Korean visitor to dismount and enter and rest, the mistake has been made of peremptorily *ordering* him to get down and go into the house. On the contrary, a lady has been known to use to her servant the politest forms of language, such, for instance, as would be equivalent to asking him to "have the extreme condescension

Digitized by Google

to go and bring in a scuttle of coal." Some difficulty and qualms of conscience have been felt on this account by Americans, especially by missionaries. Coming as they do from a country where the equality of man is preached (although socially, at least, not practiced), and carrying a gospel one of whose fundamentals is the brotherhood of man, they have felt the inconsistency of addressing a man in terms which imply a consciousness of superiority in the speaker. But it should be recollected that this manner of speaking is a custom of the country. The coolie who is addressed by a man whom he regards as far above him feels no more sense of degradation than does the jin-rickshaw coolie in Japan at getting a passenger and acting as the latter's horse, though the feeling of the foreigner at first is about the same in each case. Further than that, were any other course followed, it would be looked on very much as would disregard of the rules of grammar in polite society in our own country. Were a foreigner, in traveling through the country, to address the coolies as his equals, two things might result: the coolies would consider him as low in the social scale as themselves, and, therefore, would not give him the respect really his due; and the people whose social position approximated his own, hearing him speak to common people in what they would think too high terms of respect, would, if addressed in the same way, consider themselves aggrieved or insulted. It must, however,

Digitized by Google

be remembered that Koreans realize the difficulties of their language for foreigners, and that they make great allowances for the mistakes which they make in using it. This belief of the people that others cannot learn their language often puts the Koreans into rather ludicrous positions. More than once, when passing through a part of the capital not much frequented by foreigners, we have seen articles we desired to purchase. On stopping and inquiring the price, we have been amused by the assumption of the shopkeeper that we could not understand his answer, and have watched his most extraordinary pantomimic exertions as he tried to show the value of the things, counting on his fingers or laying out coins or sticks to show the price, notwithstanding he had been addressed in Korean and had grasped the meaning. After looking mystified for a while we would suddenly ask the man if he spoke Korean, at which he would look astonished and say, "Yeh, yeh" (yes, yes), and we would tell him to do so; at which the bystanders, who are generally quick at a joke, would laugh, and sometimes bore the fellow with their badinage.

The general courtesy of the people, spoken of in another chapter, becomes especially noticeable in this connection. When a Korean hears a foreigner speak the native language correctly and fluently, his astonishment knows no bounds. Once a party of us were pass-

Digitized by Google

ing along one of the streets of the capital, when two countrymen, attracted by the novelty of our appearance, began to follow us in order to watch our doings. This finally became monotonous and unpleasant, and one of the party turned and requested the countrymen to do one of two things—either to go ahead or stay behind. They then passed on, one remarking to the other as they passed, "And do they speak Korean in his country also?"

Students of Korean are discussing the question of the affinities of that language, and are disputing whether it is an inflectional or an agglutinating one. Certain it is that many of the endings, especially of verbs, are words yet used independently. It must also be acknowledged that of many other endings, for instance that marking the accusative, the derivation is unknown or at least very uncertain. It must also be borne in mind by those who may study the Korean grammar that the natives have very little idea of the science of philology, and hence but little help must be expected from them in the direction of scientific derivation, and hardly any reliance can be placed on their statements. As an example of this, on a certain occasion three men of good attainments in Korean and Chinese were asked the derivation of a certain ending, and as many different answers were given. The facts seem to be these: a student may consider the language inflectional, and may so learn it; that is, paradigms of nouns and verbs can

Digitized by Google

be constructed, by learning which he will have the grammar of the language at command. But as surely as he begins to use his knowledge, he will find that most of the conjunctions are attached immediately to the verb, from which the agglutinative character is at once seen. Moreover, what may be termed the case endings of nouns may be omitted when no ambiguity will arise from their absence. The student has also to learn that there are no *pre*positions in the language, the words which perform those functions being *post*-positive. There is still another difficulty which learners will meet: it is a matter of experience that a foreigner may learn to understand the ordinary conversation of Koreans whom he meets every day, and will take in the sense of what is said by the mass of the people, but on a visit to a nobleman or high official will find a different vocabulary in use, and will be unable to follow the drift. This is due to the fact that officials use many so-called Sinico-Korean words—*i. e.*, words borrowed from the Chinese —which are not in use among the masses. This corresponds to what is found in our own language, the Anglo-Saxon warp and the Latin and French woof. And this arises largely from the peculiarity we have mentioned above—viz., the bilingual character of Korean.

Along with the spoken or vernacular, we find the Chinese as the medium of correspondence, of official documents, etc.; not that the vernacular is not written, but that it is not the vehicle of the best literature of the

Digitized by Google

country. Many books are printed in Korean, but they correspond to our cheap fiction. Almost all works of a philosophical, religious or ethical character are in Chinese. A knowledge of this fact leads us to the correct conclusion that Chinese culture and letters dominate the peninsula. The Confucian and Mencian classics are the sacred books of Korea, as they are of China. Those who make any pretensions to scholarship must read easily and write correctly the Chinese. This is the medium of promotion to official position. It is that without which no one can hold office. Hence it is probable that at least one-third, perhaps one-half, the male population is tolerably well versed in both Korean and Chinese, for nearly all males are eligible to office. Reference has been made to the examinations held for promotion to official position. As these vary only in importance and in the numbers attending them, a description of one will suffice:

These examinations or *quagas* are held in the enclosure behind the palace. To them come candidates for honors from all parts of the country. These candidates assemble at the time announced, to write essays or poems on the topics assigned or to answer the questions asked in the paper. Examinations are not conducted like those in China, where each candidate is shut up in a little compartment until he has produced his thesis. On the contrary, the competition is in an open field, where the candidates work, some in the heat of the sun, some under the shade of a large umbrella, some of the

Digitized by Google





Little Porters and Candy Vender.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

more wealthy under tents. One umbrella or one tent will often shade several candidates, who take their ink from the same source. The paper used by the contestants is huge in size, measuring about a yard in width by four feet in length. This is folded in a manner settled by custom, and the requisite number of characters painted on each side. The ink employed is India ink, for the preparation of which a hollowed stone or slate is used, in which a little water is poured and the ink then rubbed in the water. The pen is, properly speaking, not a pen at all, but a small brush, the holder of which is a piece of bamboo. This is dipped in the mixture, and then the characters are painted on the sheets of paper described above. In this way beautifully shaded work is produced. There are to be seen in the old palace in the capital inscriptions which a well-informed Chinaman said would bring thousands of dollars in China because of the beauty of the writing. As the work of rubbing the ink is no small task, it often happens that a party will associate and work together, one rubbing while the others work, and each taking his turn. Passing around among the contestants are numbers of venders of candy, which is made of honey and sprinkled with little seeds, and venders of little cakes and of various drinks, some of which are harmless enough, others suited for making the head swim. Attendants and officials and soldiers swarm in crowds. On one side of the field is a massive stone platform elevated nearly six feet above the level, and on

Digitized by Google

this a canopy beneath which are chairs and in the rear of which are neat little buildings, where His Majesty, who is supposed to be the arbiter of the contest, remains during the examination. A large space is fenced off in front and at the side of this platform with ropes held up and fastened by various curious native weapons—spears, war-clubs, antiquated halberds and weapons combining the make-up of sword and spear, and resembling bill-hooks used for clearing underbrush from woodland. Soldiers armed with muskets and various firearms, native and foreign, antique and modern, march or lounge around; side by side lounge rather than stand two soldiers, one armed with a repeating rifle of excellent make, with sabre-bayonet fixed, and the other bearing a native flint-lock with small breech-piece, fired not by pressing against the shoulder, but held out at arm's-length. These guards do not seem to be there for the purpose of watching the candidates or to prevent unfair advantages being taken. Their sole purpose seems to be to add to the pomp of the occasion. The candidates are all known by their caps, tall, black, woven of horse-hair and open at the top, which distinguish them as far as they can be seen. These candidates range in age from boys to hoary-headed veterans, from the silken- and fur-robed noble to the cotton-clad peasant. As their papers are finished they are signed, then unfolded, rolled up into a neat roll, and then brought and thrown as far into the rope-

Digitized by Google

enclosed area as they can be tossed. We once saw a boy come up gayly, with careless and joyous face, and with a laugh that showed the hopefulness of youth gleefully pitch over his paper, evidently casting hardly a thought upon this his first essay in the arena of literature. Thence his paper was picked up and carried to be placed on the platform, where it would be lost in the pile which soon became many feet in length. Soon after, we saw approach an old man who pushed his way through the throng which surrounded the enclosure up to the very front, and then, with anxiety written on every line in his face, carefully poising his paper in the air, he threw it at the feet of a servant, who picked it up without a thought that in that paper were concentrated the study of a lifetime and perhaps the last hopes of an old man of gaining that goal of a Korean's desires, official position. We saw the old man stoop and crane his neck as he saw his last venture carried up and laid away in the pile, with nothing to distinguish it from the hundreds which lay there, and then, as he saw it safely laid away, with a sigh that reached our hearts and aroused our sympathy, he turned away, hoping against hope, and, gathering up his writing-tablet and his equipments, he slowly wended his way home. We saw few sights in Korea which appealed so powerfully to our sympathy as that old man, whose aspect was almost pitiful while with solicitude he watched his paper laid away. We could not approach

Digitized by Google

him to ask his hopes and fears, but doubtless he had been present at many *quagas*. Perhaps as a boy he had first entered the lists. He had saved and studied, perhaps come yearly from a distant province, and year after year, trial after trial, had passed, and still to him the coveted prize did not fall. At last, saving his strength and husbanding his resources, he had mustered up courage to try yet this once. If he failed now, perhaps he would die of grief. Sad to say, this old man's effort was unsuccessful. The man who took first prize was a young nobleman, son of a high official.

The severity of these examinations is undoubtedly very great. They are often on some important subject treated in the Chinese classics. Such questions are asked as: "What does the yih king say is the duty of children at the death of a father?" The answer to such a question necessitates a perfect recollection of a long passage, every character of which must be reproduced with the utmost faithfulness. We recognize at a glance the intricacy of the Chinese characters. When we recollect that these characters have to be memorized, and that the order in which the strokes of the complex characters must be made is settled and may not be deviated from, the severity of the task begins to appear.

We have referred in the chapter on government to the method in which the successful candidate is chosen. When the competitors number nearly a thousand, as

Digitized by Google

they often do, the king, who is the arbiter, can certainly not find time to examine all the papers. As a matter of fact, he sees only a few, perhaps not more than a single one. What more natural than that, by a prior arrangement, the paper of a certain competitor should be found so far in advance of all the rest that only that one shall be found worthy of meeting His Majesty's eye, and so the favored one get the reward his cash has bought? Or perhaps a fellow-mandarin has a son whom he desires to have elevated, and the assistant, realizing that his time may come later, yields to persuasion and favors his friend. Thus it happens that very many of the important honors fall to the nobles, though it does happen that "well-laid plans gang aft agley." The king sometimes perhaps suspects the stratagem, and insists on seeing more than his helpers desire: the consequence is an unexpected reward of merit. In the smaller and less important *quagas* the poorer classes are very often successful, and I have known several who have worked their way up from low positions to very respectable places in the public service. It is undoubtedly the purpose of His Majesty to gather around him an able and faithful corps of workers, but it must not be forgotten for a moment that the means relied on for promotion to positions of trust is nearly always proficiency in the Chinese language.

This institution of the *quaga* is one of the redeem-

Digitized by Google

ing features of countries dominated by Chinese learning. It shows the tribute paid to culture, and is one of the things which renders so pleasant in the country the position of foreigners, who are looked on as men who have taken honors in the American *quagas*, and so are entitled to high consideration.

Not the least peculiar of the abuses attending these *quagas* is the passing of them by proxy. Thus a man who finds himself unable from any cause to attend may go to one of his friends and engage him to write a paper for him, paying down a certain amount, from a dollar to several dollars, and agreeing to pay a much larger sum provided the paper shall secure the prize. One man sometimes passes in not less than four papers in a single examination. The facts that there is no registry of candidates, and that the papers are not handed in, but are thrown inside the roped enclosure, make this easy, and so in this way the *quagas* are a source of income for men who are known to be good scholars and excellent writers.

The Koreans have many tales connected with this institution, and some of the best of them cluster about a monarch who was the Korean Haroun Al Raschid. One of these runs somewhat as follows: The king, who loved to go around incognito, that he might find out the condition of his people, one time applied his eye to a crack in a window, and was amazed to find in a room which betrayed the poverty of the

Digitized by Google

occupants an old man weeping, a woman singing and a younger man gayly dancing to the woman's merry notes. The combination was an unusual one, and aroused the curiosity of the king. He therefore knocked at the entrance, and after a little conversation, in which he played the role of the belated traveler, he confessed what his curiosity had led him to do, and, mentioning the sight he had beheld, asked an explanation of the peculiar actions. His host, who was the dancer, was for a long time reluctant to tell the reason, but at length told the disguised king that he was the son of the old man who wept. The old man, he said, had formerly been wealthy, but through the avarice and oppression of officials had been stripped of his possessions. They had since been in great straits, and often knew not how to provide for their daily needs. The old man, on this account, had grown melancholy, and so, at eventide, the son and his wife were wont to sing and dance, so as to draw the old man's mind from his troubles. This was the explanation of the strange scene presented to the visitor's eye. The king, not disclosing his identity, then entered into conversation upon topics of national interest, and discovered in his host a man of extraordinary knowledge and discretion, which, coupled with the filial love so admirably shown in the repression of his own anxiety in the endeavor to cheer the father, quite won the king's heart. He then asked the host whether he proposed to

Digitized by Google

enter the *quaga* to take place on the morrow. To this the reply was given that he had not even heard there was to be one. "Oh, yes," said the king, "and if I were you I would enter. If you take the prize, it will place you above want, and make your father's last days comfortable and bright." The host promised that if there was an examination, he would certainly attend. The king, apologizing for his intrusion, withdrew, and on returning to his palace ordered a proclamation to be posted, giving notice of a *quaga* to be held on the following day. The people of the capital were surprised, for no examination was expected then; but the news flew, and the candidates flocked in. When the subject was given out, it was: "A weeping elder, a singing woman and a dancing man." The candidates, excepting one, were all astonished, and agreed that no such subject was treated in the classics, and wondered how they should proceed. The man who had entertained the king was also lost in wonder, not at how he should treat the subject, but at the coincidence between the subject and his own daily practice. However, he was at home with the theme, and treated it in a skillful and ingenious manner. Upon examination, his paper, of course, was the only one which treated the subject adequately, and so he was adjudged the prize. Orders came to him to be present the following day at the court, as he was now an official. He was therefore presented at court, and was astonished to find on the

Digitized by Google

throne his late inquisitive visitor. The king received him kindly, appointed him to a lucrative office, and gained for himself a staunch adherent and an able officer.

The above story has a twofold use: it illustrates the stories current in Korea, and also shows how it is possible so to frame an examination as to benefit the one intended, and no one else.

As to the originality of the Koreans and their literary ability the following little poems will be good evidence. They were written in Japanese, and were translated into English by the Rev. Henry Loomis of Yokohama, Japan, to whom the author is indebted for copies. The names of the writers will be remembered, especially that of Kim Ok Kiun, as belonging to men connected with the emeute of 1884:

Bright youth with all its joys has flown,
My locks are touched with gray,
And when a few more years have gone,
I too shall pass away.

I crave the feelings of a boy,
And purpose in my heart
That youthful hope and youthful joy
Shall nevermore depart.

My locks may whiten as the snow,
My form grow stiff and chill,
But in my heart shall dwell the glow
Of youthful spirits still.

KIM OK KIUN.

Digitized by Google

Oh mountain! Time's great sentinel!
Hoary with age, speak now and tell
What names, illustrious in their day,
In stately pride have passed this way.

And if in ages yet to come
Some passing traveler here may roam,
And make from thee the same request,
Oh, give my name among the rest.

PAK YONG HIO.

Within a mountain recess deep
A lonely hamlet stood,
And there I lay me down to sleep,
With nothing to intrude.

But when in slumber sweetly laid
A barking dog near by
Aroused me from my rustic bed,
To see what foe was nigh,

No form of danger hovered near—
The dog was there alone,
And, foolish brute! in idle fear
Was barking at the moon.

And thus how often do we see,
For want of better sight,
A fancied ill will prove to be
Only the moonbeams light.

SAH JAI PIL.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

THE PEOPLE.

IT is a fact that even those who have visited the peninsula have returned with mistaken impressions concerning the physique of the people. Tourists have talked and newspaper correspondents have written as though Koreans were much above the average of mankind in height. There are two possible explanations of this: those who have either visited or lived in Japan, or even in China, have become accustomed to the diminutive stature of those peoples, and when among the taller people of Cho Son have naturally magnified the stature of the latter; another reason for this mistake is found in the garb of the Koreans. It is a well-known fact that a long overcoat adds to the apparent height of a tall person, and seemingly enhances the stature of a short one. Now, the Koreans all wear flowing coats, and when we remember that these coats are often white, we can understand the misapprehension visitors have labored under in speaking of the stature of a Korean. One is often some time in the country before he finds out the truth of the matter. Many a time, as he looks at a man standing some few feet

Digitized by Google

away, he will imagine the latter considerably taller than himself, but a side-by-side comparison will show the shortness of the Korean's stature. Anthropometric records have not, so far as I know, been kept of the Koreans, but my own observation would lead me to say that the men average a little over five feet six inches in height—perhaps five feet seven. The women —those whom I have seen; and the reason for this qualification will appear in the chapter on social life —are very much shorter. Their hair is long, straight, black and coarse. Without dressing or dye, such as nearly all use, there is a tendency to a dirty, tawny tinge, but as the hair is an important feature in the toilet of both sexes, this tendency is carefully kept out of sight under oil and a blacking mixture lavishly laid on. There is not the slightest tendency in the hair to curl, and even after it has been in braid for some days there is hardly the suspicion of a wave. If there is any feature which suggests the common origin of the Chinese, the Koreans, the Japanese, the North American Indians and some of the Esquimaux, it is not the one so usually pointed out—their high cheek-bones—but rather their long, straight, coarse black hair. Apropos of this, has any one pointed out the fact that the North American Indians shave all but the scalp-lock, as a suggestion of a connection in origin between them and the Celestials? A joker might find room for further comparison in the Koreans' habit of seiz-

Digitized by Google



Group of Peasants.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ing the top-knot in a fight. The Koreans in many points of physique seem, as in their geographical position, midway between the Chinese and Japanese. They are on the average much taller than the latter, and probably do not reach the average stature of the former. In color they are not so dark as the Japanese, nor yet have they the dingy yellow cast of the Chinese. Occasionally one sees a native from the country whose skin is a dirty brown. Some of them are quite fair, and whiteness of complexion is so valued that the women are not a whit behind our Western belles in the use of powder, which they find ready to their hand in the shape of rice flour. There is, however, in the case of girls—of women, again, not much can be said here—no tendency to hide the use of this beautifier. This whitener is put on with lavish hand and quite often with good effect. The Korean has the oblique eye, thus marking his Mongolian origin. The high cheek-bone is also there, and a decided tendency to the flat nose. In build the Koreans are generally sturdy, and the impression one gets is that they are a well-developed, strong people. But observers are often surprised to find that they do not have the strength their appearance seems to call for. Newcomers often call them lazy on seeing the great ado they make in bearing and lifting heavy weights. Many a time, until we got used to them, we have become impatient at the struggles of servants in raising some article of furniture, and one of us has

Digitized by Google

lifted without unusual exertion what two of them seemed to find a heavy burden. This weakness is doubtless real, not assumed. Their diet is largely rice, and often in times of scarcity not so good as that; lentils and millet, and even barley, furnish them sustenance, while in summer time many a meal is made on cucumbers, skin and all, without salt! It is well known that the rice-eating peoples lack the density and elasticity of muscle of the meat-eating nations, and so here there is a reason much more to the credit of the Koreans than that so often charged to them—innate laziness.

A reason has already been suggested for the disinclination of the average Korean to work beyond a certain maximum in a given time.

A very common (and correct) report is that women are not generally seen in the streets; that is, they are not at liberty to go out as frequently and as freely as in our own land—at any rate, those above the coolie class are not. But the accomplished traveler, with his usual perspicacity and penetration, is often in the country only a few hours when he discovers that the report is unfounded. One gentleman of this class, on his second day in the capital, asked about this, and when he was assured of the truth of the statement, he would not be convinced but that there was a conspiracy to make the world believe an untruth. In a walk about the city he remarked on the way back

Digitized by Google

that he had seen many women during the stroll, and in confirmation of this pointed to a group just ahead of us. The mistake was certainly excusable, for the party was clad in long, flowing overgarments, and the hair hanging down the back in braid gave them the appearance of women. This gentleman was considerably crestfallen when he was informed that the supposed women were unmarried boys, who always wear their hair in that fashion. The adult—or, which amounts to the same thing, the married man—wears his hair done up into a knot on the top of his head.

Those women whom we have seen—and women of good social position often take service under the foreigners—are very much shorter than the men, not exceeding the Japanese in stature, averaging not over five feet two inches. They are of heavier mould than their Eastern neighbors, having very solid, stout frames, seemingly able to endure any amount of labor. Those whom I have seen were of exceedingly modest disposition. The type of countenance is downcast, heavy and sombre. In passing through Japan one becomes accustomed to a certain sprightliness in the people. There is nearly always present a pleasing vivacity, a merry sparkle, in the eye of a Japanese woman, which calls up the answering smile. Life for them seems a game or a picnic. But from the Korean woman this sprightliness and vivacity and sparkle are absent. Life for them is serious and earnest business. Hence sober-

Digitized by Google

ness is the characteristic feature of the Korean lady. But this is not the case with the men. Nowhere can be found a readier appreciation of a joke than in Korea. As an instance of this may be mentioned the hilarity occasioned by the success of a trap we laid for a dishonest attendant. One of our men had been detected stealing wood. A particularly fine stick had captivated his eye, and he had hidden it under the house, with the intention of taking it home after dark. The place of hiding was discovered, and at dusk a small string was tied to it and attached to a mat in the dining-room in such a way that the mat would curl up as soon as any one attempted to remove the wood. The three teachers waited patiently in the dining-room, playing dominoes, until suddenly the mat began to curl, when we rushed out by the exits and surrounded the hole by which the man had crept under the house. We then called him out and summoned the other attendants, among whom were three soldiers. One of these handcuffed the fellow and awaited orders. A search was then instituted by the servants to discover how we knew what was going on, and we found two or three so overcome with laughter at what they considered the fun of the trap that they were literally rolling on the floor. For weeks we heard of this story being told by our servants to their visitors, and the table-boy could hardly cross the threshold where the mat lay without a glance at the crack and a smile or chuckle at the stratagem.

Digitized by Google

After a warning to the culprit not to allow his cupidity to get the best of him again we let him go; but the lesson was not lost on the rest of the people about the place.

The Korean has the teasing capacity fully developed. The *ahmah* (nurse) who cared for our little boy was somewhat grasping in disposition, and often laid plans for getting the best of the other domestics. As presents of fruit, beef and fish often came to us in greater quantities than we could use in the house, we usually distributed the larger part among the servants. One time such a present came, and among the other things was a peculiar preparation of stuffed dried fish. This was very tempting to the *ahmah*, but she was somewhat disgusted and offended to be told by one of the others that "that was not good for females." The other servants joined heartily in a laugh I could not suppress at the disappointed face of the woman, while the perpetrator of the joke smiled intermittently for two or three days at the recollection.

Among the people at large there seems to be not the slightest antipathy to foreigners as such. We hear in the Korean peninsula no such names as are applied to men of other climes by the Chinese. The name "foreign devil" never once met my ears, nor in all my intercourse with natives was ever heard a word in any way derogatory to foreigners because of their foreign birth. The mass of the people look up to us as being of supe-

Digitized by Google

rior powers and abilities. Tales of the achievements of our fleets, armies and guns which do not in any way equal the actual performances cause open mouths and staring eyes in the listeners. There is no evidence that with the people aught but respect is felt for visitors. While we occasionally hear tales of the ferocity and hate of Koreans for foreigners, we must remember that such feelings are sporadic, and in the periodic recurrence of these spasms on the part of the people we can always trace the fine hand of the Chinese "resident," who is at present, as he has been for years, the evil genius among the Koreans. Left to themselves, the people, rulers and all, would welcome gradual and sensible approaches to the ways of the Western world. There are among the higher officials two parties, conservatives and liberals, the former opposed to, the latter favoring, a tendency in the direction that Japan has taken. Among the former the Chinese work, and so they manage to retard Korea's advance.

The masses in the country are exceedingly credulous and excitable. They have most curious notions about the ways and doings of foreigners. As a consequence, reports concerning them, no matter how absurd they may be, find a ready lodgment in the ears of the people. The Chinese, since the Koreans have looked so readily toward Western civilization, seem to have repented urging them to open up the peninsula, and so in all possible ways except that of open coercion have

Digitized by Google

endeavored to impede the Koreans' progress. The Chinese ambassador, or "resident," as he calls himself, is heart and hand *en rapport* with this policy of obstruction. Consequently, by all arts and devices, in which he is an adept, he endeavors to combat the tendency toward opening up the country. For instance, in the summer of 1888, it was found that some boys had been stolen and sold into slavery. This is an act not often accomplished, but it is done sometimes. There was an excitement quite widespread at the time, and the Chinaman spoken of above fanned the spark into a flame of excitement by subtly spreading abroad the report, first, that the Japanese had bought the children and cooked and eaten them, then that the foreigners bought them to make medicine, and then that the eyes of the victims were used in making photographs. As the pages of this book testify, the author was a dabbler in photography, and this report was brought to his ears. The capital was in a ferment of excitement; the populace scowled from beneath lowering eyebrows whenever foreigners were seen in the town. Natives were mobbed, and in two or three cases stamped to death by a crowd when some mischief-maker cried out, "There goes a child-stealer!" In one case a man leading his own child down the main street was attacked because of such a cry, and only escaped by appealing to a petty official who chanced near by, and then by being taken before the chief justice of the city. Even after the man

Digitized by Google

was proved innocent before the judge, and had brought convincing testimony that the child was his own, the mob remained sullen and threatening, and charged that the judge was in league with those who were stealing children for the foreigners, and also with the foreigners themselves. The passion raged so violently that the king issued a proclamation saying that the reports were false, and commanded quiet. Even this had no effect, and in the course of a day or two it was followed by a stern edict that any one caught circulating such reports should be immediately arrested and punished, and that all disorder should be immediately repressed. Meanwhile, threats of all sorts had been made against the foreigners. The Koreans in the service of foreigners were menaced, and in one case mobbed. Threats were made that the houses of all not natives should be burned. Some of the foreigners were so scared by these threats that they packed a few most necessary belongings, procured ropes and hooks with which to scale the wall should that become necessary, and were ready to move at a moment's warning toward the seaport thirty miles away. The writer, knowing well the cowardly character of the people, took each night a few extra precautions, ordered that the large street gate should not be opened after night until after careful reconnoitring, and then slept in peace. He was known by the Koreans to be in possession of what they especially dread—a repeating rifle and heavy revolvers,

Digitized by Google

and consequently no visit was anticipated from hostile or marauding parties. In less than ten days the excitement subsided, and where a few days before angry crowds had congregated there were to be seen only the usual number of laughing, happy-go-lucky loungers, merchants and purchasers. It must be remembered, however, that as a contributing cause to fearlessness on the part of foreigners there was the knowledge that very few Koreans possess firearms. These are contraband articles, and by treaty stipulation they are not allowed to be sold to the natives. As the customs are administered by foreigners, it will easily be seen that very few can be gotten into the country, so that the offensive weapons are confined mainly to arrows, spears and swords, while the Korean muskets, almost entirely in the hands of the soldiers, are either flint-locks or match-locks, and hence not very dangerous.

Koreans have a wholesome fear of an armed foreigner; hence it would be no feat at all in times of excitement for one well-armed and resolute man to keep a whole street clear; and he could doubtless easily put to flight a large band of evil-disposed persons. These traits of excitability and credulity of course do not argue well for the development of the people. Their existence suggests that it might be possible for the nation to make considerable progress in Western ways, and then in a single term of excitement to upset and nullify all the advance that had been made. On the other hand,

Digitized by Google

there is the reflection that the Koreans can scarcely be more fickle than the Japanese, and that even now the latter people are not beyond mobbing an inoffensive foreigner on the very slightest grounds, as was shown in the spring of 1890. Those who have been longest in the country, however, think that there is a closer approximation to the Chinese steadiness than to the Japanese flightiness, and that there is an undercurrent of good sense which will carry the people to a high level of national life.

Another trait which is peculiarly Korean is curiosity. In that peninsula this trait is by no means exclusively feminine. It is a question whether the men are not more infected with it than the women. Of course, foreigners are as yet a curiosity. Especially is this true of the ladies. Consequently, when foreigners, especially if ladies are in the company, start for a stroll with sightseeing or shopping as a purpose, they are often followed by a crowd varying from a half dozen to more than a score of persons, all good-natured, though they often crowd a little too closely for comfort. Every motion is watched, commented upon, and each attempt to speak the language is greeted with a smile of approval and appreciation. The freedom allowed our ladies and their unconcern when under the scrutiny of many eyes is the subject of much remark. Especially interesting to Koreans is an attempt to make a purchase, and articles which to them seem

Digitized by Google

almost valueless are often picked up by these "crazy foreigners." The consequence is that merchants bring all sorts of things to the houses to be sold, and for trifles which have no value whatever they sometimes ask astonishing prices; and, on the other hand, really valuable articles are picked up for a mere song. But these visits are made the occasions of satisfying a desire to know how foreigners live, and many a surreptitious peep through half-opened doors is indulged in while some really interesting article is being examined. The servants who are employed in the foreign quarter are questioned as to the goings on inside the strangers' homes. On certain days in the year women flock in crowds sightseeing, and one goal of their desire is the inside of the houses of the *Mee-kook saram* (Americans). Some of the Americans, especially the missionaries, throw open a part of their houses to inspection. This is undoubtedly a wise procedure. Korean homes are very bare of what we regard as comforts, and probably in no way can the superiority of our civilization be so closely brought home to the people as by showing them how much it adds to our comfort. Certainly it looks like an effective argument to say to Confucians and Buddhists, "Our religion is superior to yours in this, if in nothing else, that it has developed higher comforts and made possible a higher enjoyment of life." Mere contact with foreigners often produces a wonderful change in the ways of looking at things. I had as

Digitized by Google

teacher a wonderfully neat and very gentlemanly little Korean. He came regularly, and appeared astonished at nothing he saw. After visiting me during about three months, he one day surprised me by asking if he might bring his wife to see our house and its furnishings. This request was a strange one, as will appear later. When he first came to the house, had such a thing been suggested, it would possibly have been deemed an insult, and not improbably would have caused a cessation of his visits. Yet his association with such foreigners as he saw at our home (the teachers of the royal school and their visitors) showed him that no possible harm could result from a visit by his wife. Accordingly, one day he brought her, and a very cunning little body she proved to be —unsophisticated, astonished at all she saw and ever ready to laugh. She and her husband took luncheon with us, and while she did not partake of the staple articles of diet, she showed her appreciation of fruit, cakes and nuts, receiving them with charming modesty from the fingers of her husband. Before she left we secured a photograph of herself and husband sitting side by side, which is presented herewith. Rare indeed are the pictures of a lady of the *yang-ban* (noble) class.

Koreans are wretchedly poor; poor not merely according to our standard, but judged by one much lower. One gauge of this poverty is afforded by their scale of wages. For work done about the foreigners' houses by

Digitized by Google



My Teacher and his Wife. Page 89.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

laborers, such as labor in the garden, the usual day's wages is about twelve and a half to fifteen cents. Skilled laborers, carpenters and masons, get twenty-five cents a day. These latter after their day's work is done wash and put on their clean robes, and strut down the street with the gait of noblemen, rejoicing in their easy way of living and their abundant means. Even at this rate of wages they rarely work more than four days in a week. Sewing-women and nurses get four dollars a month; gatemen, who mind the gate, cut and carry wood and fetch coal, get three to four dollars; all the servants "find themselves." Washing is done for three cents a piece. But a foreigner finds that it takes a number of people about the house to keep the work going. Comparatively large establishments are necessary there, since each servant will perform only a certain line of duty.

Another characteristic of Koreans is a love of country. They yield not even to the Swiss in their intense patriotism. This was strikingly brought out in a case which came under our immediate observation. When we arrived in Japan, in 1886, we learned that Kim Ok Kiun, the man who was at the head of the government at the time of the emeute in 1884, and who was charged with directing it, was staying in Yokohama. We had an interview with him shortly after our arrival, though this fact did not become known to Koreans while we were in the peninsula. Staying

Digitized by Google

at the hotel with us was another Korean, who was seldom seen and who hardly ever left his room. We were surprised soon to find that the hotel was guarded, and the Japanese police officers were so stationed that no one could leave the house without being seen. Subsequently we learned that this Korean had come over with the intention of assassinating Kim Ok Kiun, and the suspicion was that he was commissioned by the government, of course secretly, to accomplish that design. At any rate, the Japanese government apprehended him, and sent him back to Korea under guard, delivering him to the officials of his own government. Of course every one who knew the methods of Oriental governments of the Korean type suspected that he was going to his death, and doubtless so did he. The fact that he had compromised his government would certainly produce that result. Notwithstanding that, as soon as we came in sight of Korean shores he manifested his delight in ways beyond mistaking, and when we dropped anchor in Chemulpo harbor he came to us, and, pointing to the town, said in English (the only words he knew in that language, and which he had learned from his Japanese guards), "My country. I very glad." We never heard of him after that. At another time, when some tumblers and tricksters exhibited themselves at our compound, they were asked whether, if Mr. Barnum would engage them "for much money," they would go to America for a year. The reply was,

Digitized by Google

"Very many, many thanks. But they could not leave their country, for they would die of homesickness." So when Mr. Yi was first secretary of the Korean legation at Washington, he found life away from home insupportable, and obtained leave to return.

Travelers have often spoken of the childlikeness of Koreans. This comes out in their dealings with children. They are peculiarly susceptible to flattery. Tell a Korean that you know he is a nice fellow, and you are sure he will do something you want him to do, and the chances are that he will do it. When foreigners first began to settle, natives were not at all bashful in asking for whatever took their fancy. Dr. Allen used to receive calls from Prince Min Yong Ik after the latter had recovered from his wounds. On one occasion the doctor's rubber boots were in sight, and the prince asked what was their purpose and use. He was informed, and immediately asked the doctor to give them to him. They were the only pair the doctor had, but he did not think it polite to refuse, so he sent them to Min Yong Ik's house. Next day the boots were returned with the statement that they did not fit, and "Please send a better pair." "Of course," said the doctor, when telling the story, "he did not get any."

The vice of the Chinese, opium-eating or smoking, is extremely rare. The properties of the drug are known. One of the scholars in the school once remarked that

Digitized by Google

"it was very nice, but it cost too much money for Koreans to buy it." There is no likelihood of its becoming common among the people.

The people have been much maligned in the matter of cleanliness. In the East one learns to beware of aphorisms. Foreigners like to be witty at the expense of natives. So an Englishman was once heard to say that the dirtiest man he ever saw was a clean Korean. The impression the speaker meant to convey was that Koreans are the dirtiest people on earth. It must be kept in mind that the inhabitants of the peninsula dress in light clothing, cotton such as we use for sheeting being a staple. It follows that their clothing is easily soiled. A man starting away in the morning with freshly-laundried clothes may return at night with these clothes in a disreputable condition. In the matter of raiment, bearing in mind the material of which clothing is made, it does not appear that Koreans are unusually uncleanly. Boys' clothes are apt to become very dirty, especially the collars and backs of their tunics or coats. The hair is anointed with a blackened oil to make it glossy, and as it hangs down the back, it naturally causes discoloration of the clothing. But boys there are not more careless than elsewhere, and the same is to a great extent true of adults. The few women who are seen on the street are nearly always exquisitely neat in appearance. Their shoes are whitened, their socks are white as snow, their trousers hang spotless

Digitized by Google

below the skirts, while the latter shine in the sun and the coat seldom shows a stain. In winter the appearance is less prepossessing. Winter clothing is made by laying cotton between two layers of cotton, linen or silk material and quilting it. As the cleansing of garments made in this way involves taking them apart, naturally winter garments are worn longer before washing. At that season Koreans often present a filthy appearance. Their purses do not allow of the purchase of woollen goods, and underclothes such as we wear are unknown. In fact, wool is not produced in the peninsula.

Koreans are subject to about the same ailments that affect the rest of mankind, but malaria is one of the most common troubles. This results partly from the imperfect sewerage, which has become clogged and ineffective, and partly from the existence of ill-drained rice-paddies, which are found everywhere. The introduction of quinine has had a beneficial effect on the inhabitants of the capital and vicinity, for very many have discovered its qualities and use it extensively. The people suffer greatly from cholera in seasons when it appears in the country. The reason for this has been given in the description of the wells. A great abettor of this disease is found in the summer diet of the people, as green cucumbers, eaten often rind and all, furnish not seldom the sole substance of a meal. Night soil is never disinfected, and is carried from the cities on the backs of ponies or oxen in network bags to the farm lands

Digitized by Google

and there used as a fertilizer. One great difficulty which doctors experience in their practice among the people is the dislike and distrust of foreign medicine. Many a death has been due directly to the women's obstinacy in refusing or neglecting to administer the prescription left by the doctor. In one case which came under our immediate notice a Korean was attacked by the cholera. Drs. Allen and Heron prescribed for him, and he was fairly on the road to recovery. But his wife one day disappeared, and it was learned subsequently that she had gone to a native fortune-teller or sorcerer for medicine, after hiding or throwing away what medicine the doctors had given and which had done so much good. A day or two elapsed before her absence and its meaning came to light; the man had a relapse, and when his wife returned he was dead and buried! The superstition of the people and the fear of sorcery on the part of native doctors causes much of this trouble, but as the beneficence and ability of our physicians become more widely known the superstition and opposition will vanish.

The pharmacopœia is Chinese. Ginseng does not play so large a part as in China, because it is too costly. It is safe, however, to say that foreigners had better suffer from almost any disease than take a Korean remedy. For example, for some complaints tigers' claws are a specific. But as knowledge of the cures American physicians have wrought spreads, the people are coming to have more confidence in them. They often have

Digitized by Google

queer notions of medicine. This comes out in the treatment of the royal family. After Dr. Allen had left the country the queen was once taken ill. Her case was diagnosed and some medicine was prepared. But news came back from the palace that the medicine sent was not right. "Dr. Allen had treated the case before, and the medicine he gave was of such a color and taste, and was contained in a bottle of such a shape. Please send some more of that." The consequence is that a careful memorandum has to be made of the flavor which disguises the medicine, of the color of the compound and the shape of the bottle. Evidently Her Majesty believed that the bottle was a part of the treatment.

During the cholera season the foreigners sometimes gave their ailing servants doses of brandy. As a consequence pains sometimes became frequent amongst the servants. One fellow's pains became almost chronic, and every few days he would appear in great distress. Heroic measures seemed necessary, so a dose of asafœtida was compounded, and it was supposed that one trial would be enough. We gathered at the windows to see him make a wry face, but he, suspecting nothing and detecting nothing amiss, swallowed the potion at a gulp, and then, while a smile brightened his face, remarked, "Cho-o-o-*sim*-nida" (*Very* good). His confidence in the medicine of the foreigners was by no means abated.

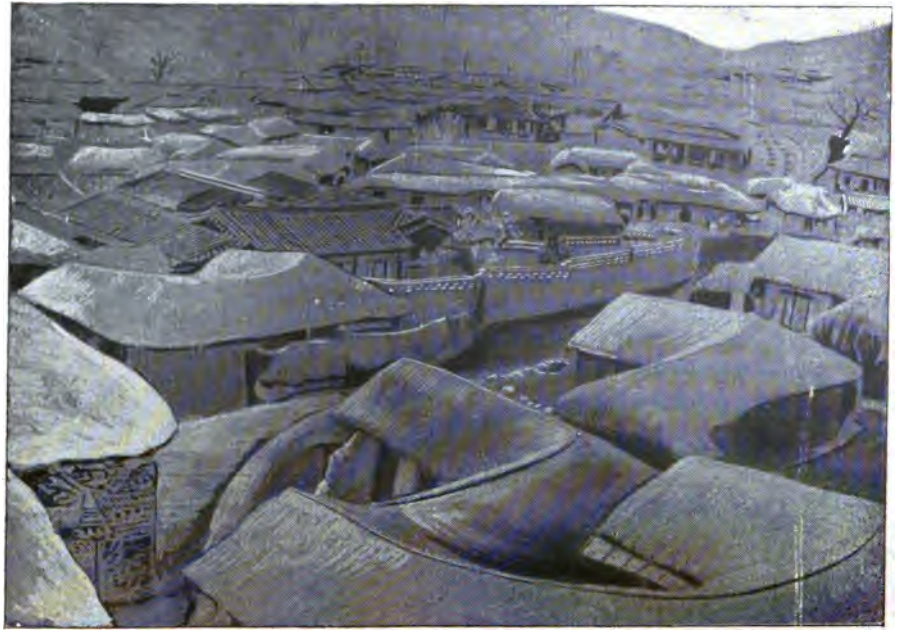
Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

IT is in the social life of the Koreans that we find the greatest contrast with our own institutions. The key of Korean life lies in the seclusion of its women. As one passes through the streets or along the roads one sees very few females. Most of those who are met wear what does duty as a veil—a light coat of some kind, generally of green silk, sleeves and all, which is cast over the head, and, when men are met, is drawn tightly over the face, so that only the eyes, sometimes only one eye, perhaps not even so much as that, can be seen; and often the wearer is so exceedingly bashful that she not only takes this precaution, but also turns her back to the street and her face to the wall of the houses along the way. But whenever I met a female thus coy and bashful, I have always felt that one thing would surely happen —that, as soon as she thought I was fairly past, her curiosity would get the better of her bashfulness, and she would throw off all restraint, to see how the foreign stranger was made up. Accordingly, after passing her a few steps, I would, if feeling a little mischievous, cast a quick glance over my shoulder, and

Digitized by Google



Peasants' Huts. Page 97.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

catch the lady in the act, generally with her face entirely exposed, gazing with both her eyes at the foreigner in his queer garb. Of course my glance back would disconcert her and send her scurrying off in the opposite direction.

Quite a number of women in the city will be seen with no covering whatever on the head; and inquiry would elicit the explanation that very many of these are proprietors of or purveyors to the restaurants, and that for the sake of getting the money they go with face uncovered. In the country there is less restraint than in the city in this respect. Women going to the city may sometimes be seen along the road with their coats neatly folded and carried on the top of the head, but as they approach the city the coats are unfolded and the head is covered. Among the peasantry, too, the rule for the veiling of women is less strenuously insisted on; but the fact remains that the custom is for women not to be seen. The truth of this is especially seen in the arrangement of their houses.

The typical form of a Korean house of the peasant class is that of a horse-shoe, along one side of which runs the street, the street door near one heel, and the women's apartments in the other wing, or near the other heel of the shoe. The apartments are arranged around the open court, so that the horse-shoe represents very accurately the plan of a Korean house. The typical plan of the house and grounds of a rich man is as

Digitized by Google

follows: Along the street is built a row of buildings, generally eight feet wide (eight feet is the unit of measure in building a house), which are occupied by servants or used as outhouses for stores of wood, etc. Sometimes these outhouses are extended around two sides of the enclosure, and even a third side may be occupied by them, being shut in from the rest of the enclosure by a wall, making several small yards, each with its little set of houses or rooms. These are occupied by the servants, male and female, who are kept on the place. The part of the lot unenclosed by outhouses is shut from the world by a wall five and a half or six feet in height. I have it on good authority that it is a penal offence for a peasant to look over the wall of a nobleman's grounds. The house of the master is placed toward the rear, and is built in the shape of a square or oblong figure around a hollow space, which is in area generally about a square rod. The apartments of the women are in the rear, and there or in the inner court they pass the most of their time.

The cardinal point of social etiquette is that the ladies of a household are not to be seen, and, so far as conversation about them is concerned, are not supposed to exist. Consequently, when a visitor makes a call on a friend, he is not taken in and introduced to the wife or wives and daughters of his host. The guest-room and reception-rooms are either apart from the house, inside the second court, or in front of the host's

Digitized by Google

own residence. In the latter case no windows or doors look in upon the inner court or toward the women's apartments. The visitor is met in the front by his host, is there entertained, and in his conversation does not, unless he is a near relation or on the closest terms of intimacy, allude to the ladies of the house. It follows from this that the make-up of social life in Korea is entirely different from what it is in the West. The factor which plays so large a part in our life, the "refining influence of woman," is there altogether wanting. Young folks and old, young ladies and gentlemen, do not meet together for social recreation and quiet games in the evening. Parties of both sexes, made up for enjoyment, do not gather round the fireside to pass away the time in winter. One never sees a family picnic party —father, mother, sons, daughters and friends—starting away to pass the day rambling on the hills or boating on the river. A picnic party may go on the river, but if the mother go along, she is in an enclosed boat, and her enjoyment is not for the spectator to witness.

So, too, the institution which passes among us in the country under the homely name of "courting" is not known in Korea. A young man there does not choose the partner of his joys and the sharer of his woes, nor does the young woman have a voice in the selection of a husband. She may have caught a glimpse of him through a hole in the window as he passed along the

Digitized by Google
633433 A

street, but he never knows how she looks, except from the description of his mother or other female relation, till he sees her on the wedding-day. The arrangement is a family matter, managed by the father. The method is somewhat as follows: A father, his son having reached a marriageable age—14 to 16—decides that the latter ought to settle down. Accordingly, he runs over the list of his acquaintances whom he knows to have marriageable daughters, and decides upon the family to which he will make overtures; having got so far, he may talk the matter over with his wife, and, having found her acquiescent, will rise some morning, don his best apparel and saunter down the street. The word saunter is used advisedly, for a Korean is seldom in a hurry. The old proverb so much quoted among Occidentals, "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," takes another shape in the Korean mind. It would probably run thus if it were formulated: "Never do to-day what can be put off till to-morrow." "If a thing is not done to-day—why, there are other days coming; and if there should not be another day, it doesn't matter any way." Consequently, the father saunters leisurely along, saluting his acquaintances, stopping to discuss this matter or that, till he reaches the home of his friend. There he is welcomed by his host, who, noting the holiday garb, has probably surmised the object of the visit. Westerners would probably come immediately to the

Digitized by Google

purpose in mind, but not so the Korean. He will talk all around the subject; real estate transfers, the price of living, the last famine, the cholera, the feats of foreign ships of war, the state of the market, all may come under discussion. And when there is a lull in the conversation, the remark may fall as if casually: "By the way, I have a son, a good-for-nothing fellow, whom I want to see settled in life." "Ah, is that so?" says the host. "I hope you will have the satisfaction of seeing him well married and a suitable wife attending to his wants." Then the conversation wanders off on any topic that suggests itself. After more or less time, if the host thinks favorably of what is in fact (and is so understood) a proposal, he will perhaps be heard to remark, "Do you know, it seems like a providence, your coming here to-day? It just happens that I have a marriageable daughter, and perhaps you were directed here. Mayhap my daughter, who is a no-account girl, might be taught her duty to your son." And from that the two fathers may proceed to make the arrangements, after which the visitor goes home and tells his son that a wife has been found for him and that he will be married on such a date. Visits are now in order between the women of the two families, and the details are arranged, and of course the mother tells her son the appearance of his bride, expatiating on her good points —her modesty, beauty, docility, obedience and so on. The young man now takes a step upward in the social

Digitized by Google

scale. He is now becoming a man, so he no longer wears his hair down his back in a braid, but has a little place shaved at the crown and the rest of his hair done up in a knot on the top. He may now wear the black hat and begin to assume the deliberate step and dignified manners of an adult. He must now be addressed in honorific language. He may use "low talk" to his boy companions of yesterday. He is now a "Mr.," and is to be treated with becoming respect. Of the customs attending the celebration of the marriage I cannot speak, except that etiquette demands that during the wedding-day the girl-wife—girls are married at the age of from 13 to 15 years—must not speak to her husband after the salutations, at the risk of hearing it as a reproach in after-life. But the young Korean has as much mischief in him as the young men of any other part of the world, and so it has become a custom for the newly-married man to try and extort from his bride some word of expostulation or reproach which may be held as a lash over her head in any stormy days of matrimony. Consequently, some portion of the time between engagement and marriage is spent in conjuring up tricks of speech and manner to tantalize and surprise some words from the bride's mouth. Sometimes the youth gets more than he bargained for. There is a story almost as widely spread in Korea as the George Washington's hatchet tale in the United States, to the effect that a bright youth had devised some particu-

Digitized by Google

larly teasing speeches with which to regale his wife on that first day, and he was unwilling that the fun to result should be confined to himself. So he placed a number of his friends in a room where they could hear, but of course could not see, what was going on. He then proceeded to apply the torture, and he was so successful that the girl, after enduring bravely for a long time all the taunts and sneers and persiflage he could bring to bear, was at last stung into calling him such a name that it covered him with confusion and stuck to him through life. After the marriage the girl is carried to her husband's home in a closed chair with a leopard- or tiger-skin covering it, and takes her place in the family of her husband. She no longer has any ties connecting her with her own parents' home. She is part and parcel of the family into which she has married, and her hopes and ambitions are henceforth all in this direction. It may be for this reason that so much more joy is manifested over the birth of a son than over that of a daughter. The former will always belong to the family, and he is one more hope of perpetuating the family name and honor. But as a girl when she marries goes out of and is lost to the family, no hopes of increased honor to it can centre in her.

But though women may not appear in the street by day, there is a time when they may take their outing. After the curfew strikes all males are supposed to be in their homes, and the ladies may then go abroad. They

Digitized by Google

do so in general, but still the coat is worn over the head, and by day or night the women are grotesque figures, with their full skirts and with the sleeves of the coat flapping derisively from about the locality of the ears. At this time a foreigner walking through the streets will meet many a little company of women chatting along on their way to make a call.

If a call has to be made by a lady in the daytime, there is quite a little trouble to be undertaken. She will be carried in a two-man chair, which may be described as a box rather less than three feet square and a trifle over three feet high, carried by two poles which run through rings in the sides of the bottom framework. This is enclosed by curtains, and a lady's chair is covered with little brass and ribbon ornaments which mark it as a lady's conveyance, and so warn off curious or prying glances. When a lady wishes to go out, one of the servants is sent to summon chair-coolies with their chair. They carry this into the inner court, set it down facing the entrance and then retire. After they have gone my lady's maid comes out, sees that no eyes are prying around and then gives the signal for her mistress, who comes out, squats in front of the chair (which is too low for her to creep into) and hunches or shuffles back inside, to sit tailor-fashion on the bottom; the curtains are then carefully pulled down and examined to see that no cranny is left through which the prying eye can see the occupant; then the coolies are

Digitized by Google



Outside Wall, showing Street and Veiled Women.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

called in, given their directions, and they take up the chair and fare, and, carrying her to the appointed place, set her down in the inner courtyard, retiring until she is ready to return, when the operation is repeated. It should be stated, however, that while the chair-curtains are so arranged as to prevent people's looking in, they do not prevent the occupant from seeing out, so that whatever goes on outside can be watched by my lady as she passes through the streets.

This seclusion of women is an obstacle in medical work, and also, as will be seen in the chapter on missions, in mission work. It necessitates the maintenance of a lady medical missionary to treat Her Majesty the queen. There is, however, one peculiar fact—that women will throw off all restraint in the house and presence of a foreigner, but if while they are visiting there a native male comes in, they scurry out of his sight with the utmost haste.

It might be imagined, too, that the method of contracting marriage would produce very unhappy homes; and yet this does not seem to be the case. Of those few cases which I have had the opportunity of studying, and others which came under my eye, by far the larger part seemed to have produced as much happiness at least as is found in the majority of our own homes. My teacher, who visited us in company with his wife, seemed almost extravagantly fond of this engaging little woman; and as one passes through the streets and sees the men on

Digitized by Google

every hand playing with and caressing the children with every mark of fondness and affection, one is assured that love is a potent factor in Korean homes.

Divorce is astonishingly easy, but infrequent. It seems that all that is necessary is for a husband to tell his wife to leave, and she is thereby divorced and the decree entered. Yet but one case of this kind came to our knowledge, and even in that instance the parties afterward became reconciled.

The Koreans are a domestic people, and are generally chaste. Their character in this latter particular is far above that of their neighbors, the Japanese.

Of course it is seen at once that this absence of native women of quality from the streets is one reason why foreign ladies who go out for a walk or to see the sights are such a curiosity to the Koreans. The latter deem it strange that these ladies—and they think nothing disparaging or discreditable of foreign women on this account—should be willing to let their faces be seen in public and by any one who chooses to look.

But it must not be imagined from what has been said that woman has no influence in Korean life. It is a well-known fact that the queen has very great influence with the king, and that a great deal is done according to her wishes. More than once in the presence of her lady physician, when matters of public policy were being discussed, she has asked the king to be quiet while she expressed her opinion; and, hidden by a screen, she once

Digitized by Google

lectured an official on his remissness in the performance of his duties. In ordinary life this is also true. When men address women in the street, it is almost always with the "polite" forms. Koreans are loud talkers, so that when a family misunderstanding is in process of adjustment the neighbors generally hear what is going on. Many a time, while passing along the street, we have been amused to note that while a husband was calling his wife all the names he could think of, he usually ended by attaching to the verb an ending indicative of his unbounded respect for the partner of his bosom. There is still one other fact indicating the position of women: while foreigners are expected to talk "low" or "impolite" talk to their male servants, the women, seamstresses and nurses, who are in their employ expect to be addressed in polite terms, and object if spoken to in any other way.

In a country dominated by Chinese culture, as we have found Korea to be, it is to be expected that Chinese customs of family life will be found in force. We are therefore prepared to find in Korea the greatest respect for old age. Hoary hairs are a sign of glory, and a bald head is, among Koreans, a mark of wisdom. Those who have followed the history of missions will remember that Dr. Allen was the first missionary in the country after the making of a treaty. He doubtless owed a great deal of his popularity and the confidence of the king and government to the fact that he

Digitized by Google

was rather bald. On one occasion a number of foreigners were out skating, and the doctor was in the company. The pond was surrounded by Koreans who were watching our evolutions on the ice and wondering at the skill displayed. Suddenly the doctor lost his hat, and as the people gazed on the broad expanse of forehead, reaching nearly to his crown, they remarked, in accents of respect, "Why, he's an old man!" and their wonder increased at the agility he displayed. So the father and grandfather are objects of veneration, and the manners of youth toward old age are worthy of imitation in our own land.

As in China, so in Korea, the elder brother is the hope and pride, and, after the death of the father, the seat of authority in the family. The younger members of the household are taught to yield to him in all things, and he is next to the elders in influence during their lifetime. He inflicts chastisement *in loco parentis* upon the younger members of the family, and as regard goes by age, and the second son is superior to the third, and so on down, the lot of the youngest son is often an unenviable one. We had in our employ two brothers whose father was dead and whose mother was old and very feeble. The elder brother had on one occasion given the younger some command which was disobeyed. The elder then proceeded to punish the offender, whose cries reached me in my study. After finding out what was the matter, I sent to have the beating stopped, but

Digitized by Google

the messenger returned, saying that Jumbo (so the older one had been nicknamed because of his size) had refused to cease chastising his brother, inasmuch as he was the elder and had the right according to Korean custom to punish his junior. The cries of the little fellow were pitiful to hear, so I went out and managed to make Jumbo understand that whatever his rights under Korean law might be, no such doings would be tolerated on the place of a foreigner. I found out afterward that this elder brother, a boy of about sixteen and utterly irresponsible, had beaten his brother with a club as thick as his wrist, and had bruised the little fellow cruelly. Had the beating taken place before they came into our employ, the authority of the elder would have been almost despotic, and it was in his power to make the other lead a wretched life. As the case stood, foreigners are not under Korean law, and even their servants are not liable to arrest except through their respective consulates. It was therefore practicable to interfere and save the boy from severe punishment.

While monogamy is the rule in Korea, there is no law against polygamy, and many Koreans have two wives. Or, to put it in another way, concubinage is a legalized practice; so that two wives, or a wife and concubine, are not infrequently heard smoothing out the clothes of their lord, the fact of there being two being easily discerned by the frequency of the taps of the ironing-sticks.

Digitized by Google

The greetings Koreans use are quite Oriental. The three most in use are, "Are you well?" used generally to inferiors; "Have you been free from sickness?" or "May you be free from sickness!" more honorific than the preceding; and "May you have peace!" which is the most complimentary.

While promiscuous social gatherings are from the nature of things not permitted in Korea, there are usually little assemblies of men after night, and groups may be seen in the little anteroom or entrance, seated around the *hibachi* if it is cold, chatting or singing songs or telling tales or listening while one reads a book. One thing which strikes a newcomer as particularly strange is that a Korean when reading, no matter what it is—song, letter, book or prayer even—sings or rather intones it. This is the only peculiarity which suggests a connection with the Chinese, and may be a reminiscence or reflection of the "tone" of the Chinese language. The little gatherings of men just spoken of suggest the meetings at the country store in our own country districts. Undoubtedly, many a disturbance has been fomented at these assemblies; and it is quite well known that the Jesuits, who have lived so long in disguise in the peninsula, have taken advantage of the custom to tell the tale of the Virgin and her Son.

Nor are household games wanting in this country. It is well known that China disputes with India the honor of inventing chess, and we should naturally sup-

Digitized by Google

pose that in Korea, Chinese culture would bring in that game. But a Western chess-player would not recognize the game from the pieces or the board. The pieces are all flat, and bear their titles cut in the top and bottom. They are not played in the squares, but on the intersections of the lines. Nor are they all placed on the board at once, but repose in a basket at the player's side, and are put in position as the exigencies of the game require. Another indoor game is one resembling go-bang, played also at the intersections of the lines, and requiring two hundred pieces. Dominoes are used, as are also cards and a game somewhat resembling draughts.

One tradition which obtains in Korea undoubtedly obstructs the advance of the country. It is that men of the *yang-ban* (gentleman or noble) class, even though their means do not furnish them the necessities of life, are not expected to work and produce their own living. A gentleman may starve or beg, but may not work. His relations may support him, or his wife may, in one way or another, supply means, but he must not soil his hands. This custom has so firm a hold that it is constantly observed in practice. If a nobleman loses official position and property, he generally becomes a hanger-on at the home of some relation who is more fortunate, and he trusts to the turn of the wheel to regain his position at the public crib.

Although living is remarkably cheap for natives in

Digitized by Google

Korea (one hundred cash, or five cents, sufficing for food for one day), the number of non-producers is swelled to large dimensions by this addition to the number of officials, who of course add nothing to the wealth of the country. The only remedy for this is probably the adoption of a new civilization, and familiarity with the fact that among Western men, who stand so high in the opinion of Koreans, work is not a disgrace. Mere association with foreigners will do much to bring a change in this respect.

When the teachers arrived in the country to take charge of the king's school, called the Royal College, they found themselves occupying an enviable position in Korean eyes, as men who had taken rank in the great American *quaga*. In other words, they were looked upon as "gentlemen" in the Korean sense. Now, Korean "gentlemen" are not supposed to carry anything for themselves. Our scholars, all chosen from the nobility, would not carry their books from their study-rooms to the class-rooms: a servant had to do that for them. Whenever a gentleman goes abroad he is accompanied by a band of servants, more or less numerous according to his rank or means, who carry his belongings. He does not carry even his pipe. So when we went out into the street, it was very much against the will of the attendants that we should carry anything.

Soon after our arrival a soldier, by order of His

Digitized by Google

Majesty, was sent to each teacher, to be a sort of personal attendant and messenger. If either of us went hunting, the soldier in attendance always took the gun and carried it till we got to the hunting-grounds. The distress of my man was rather pitiful the first day that I brought out two pieces, a shot-gun and a rifle, and he had to submit to my carrying one.

In like manner, in the spring, when one of the teachers commenced gardening, of which occupation he was especially fond, and began by using the spade, an attendant ran up and tried to take the spade out of his hands, and remonstrated with him on doing "coolies' work." The servants can hardly understand ladies taking hold of the housework in the energetic way of Americans, and accomplishing so much.

It is a revelation to the Koreans to find men who, they admit, are gentlemen, the peers of their own officials of high rank, deeming it no dishonor to engage in manual labor. This foreign custom is bearing fruit already. One Korean at least of the *yang-ban* class can be pointed out who, finding himself out of funds, instead of living upon his relations, took a place in the house of one of the missionaries, and as steward earned his bread by hard labor. That Korean was really little short of a hero, for it was no slight thing for him to brave the uplifted eyebrows and familiar address of those who had been beneath him, to fly in the face of

Digitized by Google

the traditions of his country, and to earn instead of "sponge" his bread. Yet there is an epithet used in quarrels which shows that there is a foundation in the sentiment of the people for a better order of things. A man will sometimes call an opponent a *peero mogganan nom*, a "fellow who lives by borrowing." This is as insulting an expression as can be applied. There may come a time, then, when Koreans will believe in the dignity of labor; and foreigners who are in the country now, and who are the objects of Korean watchfulness, cannot do a better work than to show, by disdaining no decent work, that there is no disgrace attaching to labor. There is a tendency in Eastern countries, where service is cheap and servants are many, to let the natural laziness in one's nature assert itself, and to allow matters to go easily. The Anglo-Saxon race owes its dominant position to its energy and tirelessness, and these, in turn, are born of the knowledge that labor is honorable. It is to be hoped, then, that the tendency of foreigners in Korea will not be to pander to Korean notions in this respect, for fear of losing caste in their eyes, but to maintain the ascendency their civilization gives them over Koreans, and to prove that that ascendency is due to the exercise of natural and acquired powers in doing useful and beneficent work.

In the peninsula there is of course nothing resembling the caste distinctions of India. Men may pass, through the medium of scholarship, from the peasant class to

Digitized by Google

the rank of scholar and noble. But there is a great deference among the people, which is insisted on by officials themselves, toward officials. For instance, in discussing business men below a certain grade (that know as *cham-way*) may not sit in the presence of men of higher rank unless invited to do so. Hence when the teachers sent on to open the royal college met the commissioners of education, while chairs were provided for all at the house where we met, the interpreters did not dare to sit down, explaining to us the reason for their declining our request to be seated. Officials passing along the street are often preceded by soldiers and attendants, who clear the way for these great men, and order all men to rise and show respect to them. In the case of men of high rank, soldiers of a certain class precede the chair of the official nearly a hundred yards, shouting out at short intervals, at the top of their voices, what sounds like "Kee-roo-che-roo-oo-oo! Kee-roo-che-roo-oo-oo!" Generally two old soldiers perform this duty, each taking his turn in shouting the above call. The exact translation of the term I have never learned, but the meaning is unmistakable. It is equivalent to "Look out, all you people! here comes a great man; get out of the way, and be prepared to show respect." After these two leading soldiers, who walk on opposite sides of the street, come others, sometimes to the number of thirty or forty, and they are followed, in

Digitized by Google

the case of military officers, by two or more ranks of soldiers with muskets and fixed bayonets enclosing the chair of the officer, and then comes a train of servants, secretaries, etc., bearing various utensils.

Etiquette is graded with exactest nicety. Even the distance a host accompanies his guest on the latter's departure is measured by the elevation the guest has attained in official station. A curious custom is that two intimate friends passing along the street on horseback will not speak or recognize each other. When a Korean riding in a chair meets in the street a foreigner whom he knows, he usually stops his chair, dismounts and passes the time of day. This is a mark of respect, and a tribute not usually paid by Koreans to men of their own nationality. One thing that strikes foreigners is the universal use of the fan. A part of the equipment even of soldiers is a large fan. Every person who keeps servants is supposed to supply them during the summer season with these indispensable articles; and they serve not only to cool the person, but also to shield the face from too curious observers. Many a time have we passed Koreans on horseback and been amused to see the riders hold their fans before their faces so as not to be seen.

As in Japan, shoes are removed on entering a house. Since the shoes are a sort of sandal or slipper, this does not cause any great amount of trouble. They are easily released, and stand at the door ready to be slipped on

Digitized by Google

again when the call is over. The reason for this removal of the shoes will be seen as we describe the floor of the house. The hat is not taken off, but as it is only a light hair net, its retention on the head produces no discomfort.

The laws of etiquette are peculiar in the matter of smoking. They resemble somewhat the customs observed in our own army. It is known to most persons that among officers of the army the punctilios of formal salutes when meeting otherwise than in the line of duty are not observed. A major and colonel meeting in a friendly way do not give the military salute. But whenever a private and commissioned officer meet or pass, the latter is saluted by the former. Similarly, when men of high rank are in the presence of men of still higher rank, all smoke together. But the servant never smokes in the presence of his master. So the servants about foreigners' houses, if they are caught by the master with a pipe in their mouth, take it out and hide it behind them. Often when going down to the river for swans in the early morning, and taking my soldier along, I would put in my pocket a cigar to cheer him as we waited for the light to come or the fog to lift; but he would never smoke before me. Were we waiting, he would get behind a boat, where he could not be seen, or if we were walking he would come some distance behind me. If a nobleman passes along the street, the common people who are smoking hide their

Digitized by Google

pipes until he has gone by. The use of tobacco is universal, even boys and women using the weed. A part of the dress of a Korean is his tobacco-pouch, his flint, steel and tinder or his matches. Without it he never goes abroad, and tobacconists and pipe-dealers are far more common than in our own country. A traveler has well said that you can tell approximately the rank of a Korean by noting the length of his pipe-stem. The official is unable to light his pipe by holding a match to it—he cannot reach the bowl. So men of rank have their pipes filled and lighted by their servants, and it usually takes two to accomplish the lighting. Much taste is displayed in the ornamentation of the pipes. The bowls are usually of metal, and often the mouth-pieces are of the same material. Frequently the mouth-piece is of jade, and is correspondingly costly. Very tasty mouth-pieces are made of agate, and are displayed in all sizes and varieties in almost every store. The stems, the shortest and plainest of which are used by the coolies, are plain reeds. The more costly, decorated with paints in dainty patterns or carved, bring from twenty-five cents to a dollar. The metal bowls and mouth-pieces are made of copper and are nickel-plated. Short and handy pipes of foreign make are coming into use among the coolies, but a short pipe is to a man of note an abomination.

Should representative government ever come into vogue in Korea, colonization of voters and "repeat-

Digitized by Google

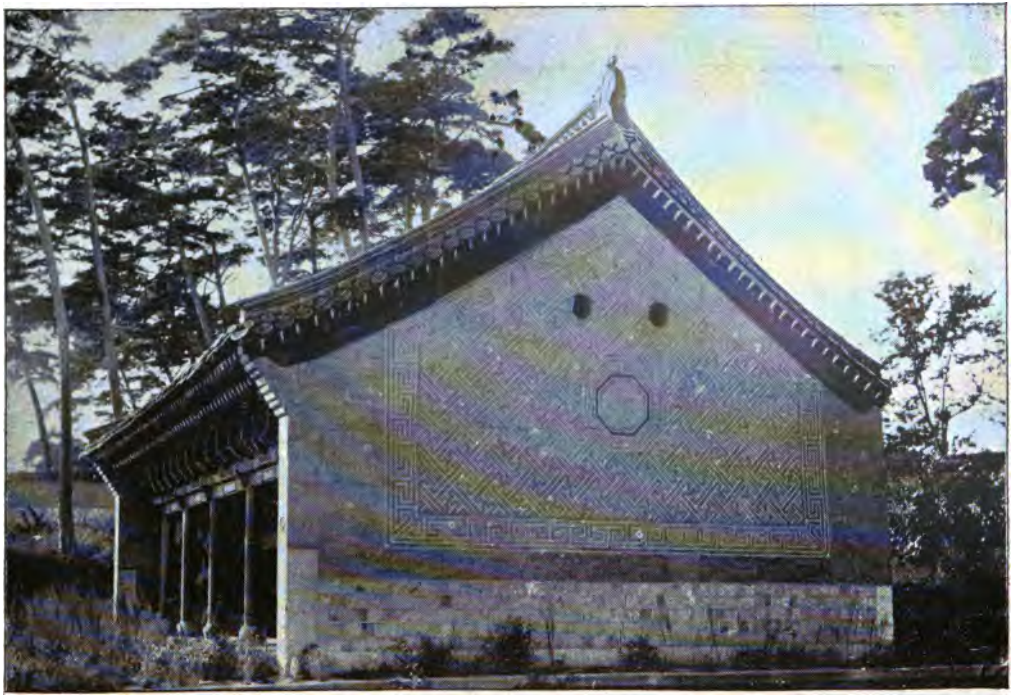
ing" will not be feasible, at least if present regulations are kept in force. Each male carries with him his card of identification. The births of males being registered, their names are a matter of record. A piece of wood about three inches long, three-quarters of an inch in width and a quarter of an inch thick is carried by every Korean, and on this is stamped his name and address. This is his card of identification, and with this upon his person it is possible for a thief to be captured and identified at any time by simply causing a muster, unless he has escaped from the kingdom. The possession of this "card" is obligatory. Many a time I have endeavored to buy one of them, but was never successful—a pretty conclusive proof of their importance and of the stringency of the regulations concerning them. One of our own men gave an illustration of the importance of this requirement when I endeavored one day to get his card away from him in return for some silver. When asked why he would not part with it, he merely said, "If this were gone—" completing his unfinished sentence by drawing his finger around his neck and shrugging his shoulders to represent decapitation. He might have been playing on my credulity, but there was probably some foundation for his statement.

The mode of building a Korean house is peculiar and cheap, and the kindness of the people is so great that it is not unusual for the inhabitants of a village to unite and help build the house of a newcomer or an unfortunate

Digitized by Google

loser by a fire or other calamity. The mode of working is as follows: Blocks of stone above a foot in height and perhaps fifteen inches square at the base are set at distances of eight feet apart along the line of what is to be the outer wall of the house, and their tops placed at the same level by means of a line tightly stretched. Opposite these, and at distances of eight, twelve or sixteen feet, according to the width of the house, are placed corresponding blocks of stone on the line of the inside wall. Upon these are erected planed posts of pine, eight inches square or larger, and eight to ten feet in height. These are connected at the top and bottom by beams stretching both lengthwise and across the house. Upon the cross-beams at the centre are placed other posts, upon which the ridge-poles rest, and the frame of the house is now complete. The window-frames and door-frames are then placed in position, and the spaces between them and the beams and posts are filled in with a basket-work of intertwined twigs. There is then laid over this, inside and out, a coating of clay, which is allowed to harden, and the cracks resulting from the drying are then filled up. Over this is spread a coating of plaster, and sometimes over this again a coat of the tough native paper is pasted. The roof is made by arranging poles about two inches thick from the ridge-pole to the beams running lengthwise of the house, and allowing them to project three or four feet over the side of the house. Across these smaller scantlings are

Digitized by Google



Mural Decorations, End of a House.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

laid, and then a layer of chips. If the house is to be roofed with tiles, a layer of earth is placed next, and then the tiles are thrown up and laid ready for use. These tiles are of two kinds: one is about eight inches in width, and curved with a radius of about four inches; the other kind is smaller, about four inches wide, with a radial curve of two inches. The larger kind are laid down beginning at the edge of the roof, and placed side by side, their edges touching, the concave surface upward and the lower end of each upper tile lapping the upper end of the one next below it. The edges of these rows of tiles are covered with the smaller tiles with the convex side up, cemented with clay or mortar. The ridge is well guarded with several rows of the larger tiles, so that the drainage of the roof is perfect. The slope of the roof is great, and there is seldom much trouble with leaks during even the most trying rainy season. In laying the roof a very graceful curve, peculiar to Eastern architecture, is given by depressing the centre and raising the corners of the edges of the roofs. In the flooring and the arrangements for heating Korean houses are peculiar. There are summer rooms which are floored with boards, but the main living-rooms are arranged in another way.

Stoves either for cooking or heating are not known in Korea, except the small open pots like the Japanese *hibachi*. Arrangements for heating are therefore of a different kind. In the houses of the poor the fire which

Digitized by Google

cooks the meals serves also for warming the sitting- and sleeping-room. The fireplace is outside the sleeping-room, and is a place about a foot square and a foot deep, covered often with a stationary pot or kettle for cooking. This fireplace is on that side of what we may call the kitchen which is next to the sitting-room. The chimney is at the farther end of the sitting-room. The flue, after leaving the fireplace and passing through the partition wall, divides into two, three or more flues, according to the size of the room. These flues are made somewhat like a drain, about a foot wide, below the level of the floor, and are covered with flagging. These flues unite in one flue at the end of the room furthest from the fireplace, and thence lead to the chimney, a very crude one, built often outside the house. The fire thus does double duty, serving first to cook the food, and then to heat the sleeping-room. The flagging is covered with a layer of mud an inch to two inches in thickness, laid on very smooth. This, when dry, is covered with a very thin rice-straw paper, and over that is laid a very thick and heavy oil paper, pasted down upon the straw paper. This last serves as a carpet, and is sometimes decorated in designs. In houses of the better class are mats or rugs of straw—sometimes the famous Kang Hwah mats. But outside of the thin rush or straw mats which serve as beds—and often these are lacking—there are no carpets, and there is no substitute for them.

Digitized by Google

It is doubtless owing to this peculiar construction of the flooring, and to the fact that the hob-nails of their shoes would puncture it, that the custom of leaving the shoes outside the floor has grown up. Koreans sleep on the floor. They rarely have bedsteads, though a few are to be seen, made only for ornament, and raised only a few inches from the floor. In winter the floor is heated as described above, and from this the air of the room takes its heat. Sometimes as an adjunct *hibachis* with charcoal fires are put in the room, but in general the only heat furnished is from the *kang* fireplace described above. The arrangement is one most suited to the means of the inhabitants, being both economical and convenient. The *kang* method is used by foreigners in some of their rooms, though of course without the cooking-utensil adjustment. With grates coal can be burned, making a very economical heat, and one especially pleasant to dress by in winter; for as the floor is warm, there is no disagreeable chill while donning the apparel. For fuel almost anything does duty —weeds, dried grass, fallen leaves, brush and wood. But as wood is dear in the neighborhood of the capital, brush, dried grass and weeds are the principal fuel. Coal is very little used by the Koreans. They have no grates, and coal does not burn in the *kangs* without a grate. Koreans will bear almost any amount of heat and foul air in their rooms in winter. They seal the windows almost hermetically, and the doors are made as

Digitized by Google

tight as possible. For light they use either tallow or wax rush-lights or little tin kerosene lamps with no chimneys. These latter shortly make the air unbearable to Americans, but the natives seem to experience no inconvenience. Bad odors never seem to cause uneasiness, either in the house or without.

The inside walls are papered with native or Japanese or Chinese paper. The peculiarity of this is that it comes in squares, not in rolls. Native paper-hangers in using foreign wall-paper in rolls have to be watched when papering foreigners' houses, or they will cut the paper into blocks, since they can handle it much more easily in that shape. The beams of wood and the rafters which show are stained a dark brown and varnished, and the spaces between the rafters are papered. A house nicely finished inside is really very artistic, and as some of the rooms have a height of twelve feet to the ridge-pole, they are dry and healthy, with abundant means of ventilation. Foreigners in remodeling the native houses for themselves use glass windows, but natives, like the Japanese, use translucent though not transparent white paper. For the last ten years small bits of glass have been coming into use more and more, and now as one passes along the streets one sees in the windows little pieces of glass, one or two inches square, set in the paper—peep-holes for the inmates. But the street side of the houses has very few windows—generally not more than one—this

Digitized by Google

custom of course being in furtherance of the privacy of the dwelling.

In wall-building Koreans have an economical material —mother earth. Along the line of the wall to be built a foundation of stones is laid. Alongside of this foundation stakes are driven in at distances of about six or eight feet, and firmly fastened at the top to prevent their spreading. Boards about a foot and a half in width and sixteen to eighteen feet long are then put in position on their edges inside the stakes, the space inside the boards being equal to the width of the wall to be built. Loose earth is then dug up, thrown between the boards and tightly rammed down and packed. When the space is filled the boards are raised and the operation is repeated until the proposed height of the wall is reached. The boards are then moved along, another length is built, and so on until this part of the work is completed. The wall is then allowed to dry, after which it is covered with a coat of mortar and the top protected with a roof of tiles projecting beyond the sides of the wall. The earth is packed and rammed so tightly as to have almost the hardness and consistency of stone. The main thing to be provided for is the surface drainage, for in the rainy season the rainfall is very heavy, and as the slope is often great, the erosive power of the water is considerable, and many a wall goes down because of insufficient or careless surface drainage.

Digitized by Google

Walls of this character said to have been built forty years ago may be seen, off which tiles and mortar have fallen, and which will resist sturdy blows with a pick, so solid was their construction. It should also be said that the projection of the roof three or even five feet beyond the walls of the houses is for the purpose of protecting the walls, which rarely suffer even in the rainiest season.

Another feature in Korean life is the water-carrier. Of course such a thing as water-works is unknown in Korea. Public works on such a scale are undreamt of, notwithstanding that in few countries are the natural conditions more favorable for the supply of water to large cities than in that peninsula.

Few houses have private wells, and the foreigners have had to have wells dug on their grounds in order to have within reach a supply of pure water. The culinary and domestic supply of water is therefore drawn from the public wells, which are situated by the roadside and seldom more than six or eight feet deep. Often within six feet, sometimes within three, flows the open drain carrying off the filth of the city, and doubtless much fetid matter filters into the wells. In the outside room of the house, or in some place equally convenient, stands a large crock or jar of earthenware as a receptacle for the drinking- and cooking-water of the family. This is brought from the wells by the water-carriers, of whom there are a certain num-

Digitized by Google

ber in each district, who belong to one of the guilds. These men wear a yoke very much like that used by the milkmen of Switzerland and England, carried on the shoulders and projecting beyond the sides, from the ends of which depend two ropes or chains with hooks attached, which fit into rings on the handles of the buckets. These buckets each hold about three gallons, and the carrier has two of them depending from his yoke. Their labors begin early in the morning, and their work is to keep the neighborhood dependent on them supplied with water. For this they receive a small sum each month from each household supplied by them. Our own supply was brought from one of the neighbors' wells, as the government had not dug one on our compound. This was a little further than the public well from which we should naturally have drawn our supply, consequently we had to pay more for carriage than we otherwise should. Besides this, we used eight or ten times the amount of water consumed in native families; yet the cost to us was only about a dollar a month. The carriers are of course met everywhere in the street, and even without their yokes they can be recognized by their gait. It is a marvel to the stranger how they manage to stride or swing along with pails full to the brim, scarcely spilling a drop. They have not even the device of carrying a floating board in the pails to prevent slopping. The water is not drawn up by windlass and bucket, but is ladled up by a wooden bowl attached

Digitized by Google

usually by three cords of straw to a straw rope. This is let down into the well, and by a peculiar flip, which is hard to learn, sent under the water and drawn up full, and the water poured into the pails. A few wells have pole-and-swivel attachments, but such are rare.

The washing is not generally done at home. Some few articles are necessarily washed there, but the most of the washing is done in the meadows and by the side of streams. More concerning this will be found in the chapter devoted to woman and her labors.

Among the strange features of Korean life are the *changs* or fairs, where the trade of the country is carried on. The places for these fairs are always near a stream and close to cross-roads, and of course on a level spot. These spots are marked by a few inns and by rude sheds put up for the protection of the wares. There are several of these in a district, and they are the media of interchange of merchandise for the neighborhood. These fairs are held about every five days, and on fair days what at other times looks like a deserted village becomes lively with the moving crowds and resonant with the cries of the venders. The goods are displayed under a shed and in the open air, and often a huge umbrella will shelter the stock in trade of a merchant. As the fairs are held on different days in different districts, venders move from one to another, transporting on their own backs or on those of

Digitized by Google

oxen or ponies the stock remaining unsold at the last one. It has arisen from this custom that there is a profession of peddlers and another of porters, and these peddlers are organized into a guild which goes by the name of *pusang*. The porters are also organized, and they are called *posang*. The former guild is under government protection, and is under the supervision of officials; it is divided into sections of one thousand men, with heads or chiefs appointed by the home office. These men are utilized by the government in various ways. They serve, for example, as detectives, their roving life making them of much value in this way, and they are also liable to military service. They are said to number nearly one hundred and fifty thousand men, and their patriotism is of a very high order. The following graphic description by Mr. Foulk, naval attaché to the legation at Seoul, and at that time an ensign in the United States navy, is taken from the "Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, transmitted to Congress Dec. 8, 1885," Washington, 1886, p. 320, and will give an excellent idea of the working of this guild. It gives Mr. Foulk's experience in returning from a visit to Song-To, a stronghold and one of the fortresses of the capital:

"It was nightfall when we started to return. The magistrate, who was an officer of the *pusang*, brought his seal into use, and called out thirty of the body to

Digitized by Google

light us down the mountains. Where these men came from or how they were called I did not understand, for we were apparently in an uninhabited, wild, mountain district. They appeared quickly, great, rough mountain men, each wearing a straw hat with a cotton ball in the band and the characters "fidelity" and "loyalty" written on the brim. We descended the worst ravine in a long, weird, winding procession, the mountains and our path weirdly illuminated by the pine torches of the *pusang* men, who uttered shrill reverberating cries continually to indicate the road or each other's whereabouts. Suddenly we came upon a little pavilion in the darkest part of the first gorge; here some two hundred more *pusang* men were assembled by a wild stream in the light of many bonfires and torches. On the call of the magistrate they had prepared a feast for us here at midnight in the mountains. Here the magistrate told me he had been asked by the late minister to the United States, Nim Yong Ik, to suddenly call on the *pusang* men of the Song-To district for services, to show me the usefulness and fidelity of the body; and he had selected this place, the middle of the mountains, and time, the middle of the night. I need not say that the experience was wonderful and impressive. The manner of the magistrate to the *pusang* men was most kind and pleasing, and they likewise exhibited the utmost regard and deference for him. I was assigned the place of honor at the feast, in the middle, before the largest

Digitized by Google

table, which was piled with a great variety of food. The leading *pusang* men—old men, nicely dressed, with kind faces—were presented to me, and exhibited curiously their pleasure in thus talking pleasantly with a foreigner for the first time in their lives. The fact of my traveling in Korea utterly alone (so far as the company of other foreigners was concerned) seemed to please them very much.

In returning to the city our own escort was sent to the rear at the request of the *pusang* men, who took charge of us. They carried us across rocky streams, up and down rocky gullies, energetic and cheerful all the while, a distance of eight miles; thence on into the city, over a comparatively level road. Thirty or forty men carried torches, *which were found lying across the path* at regular intervals, to light the way. At 3 A. M. we arrived at the *yongmun* (official residence); here the *pusang* men were dismissed, to return, for the most part, to their homes in the mountains."

It would be expected that people living on the other side of the globe would have customs differing from ours. The following may be mentioned as some of the things which go by contraries: Hats are not removed by visitors when they enter a house, nor in greeting an acquaintance on the street. But the shoes, which resemble our slippers, are left at the door when a call is made. The Korean language is written not in words, but by syllables. It can therefore be written so as to be

Digitized by Google

read intelligently either up or down or from left to right or *vice versâ*. The usual way of writing and the only way of printing, however, is in vertical columns, and the first column is on the right. Often the greeting and name of the writer come first. Watches are not carried in a watch-pocket, but hanging from the girdle. The consequence is that when people desire to know the time they hold their watches upside down. When in the school the pupils desired to know the time from the teacher's watch, the latter had to hold it reversed or difficulty was caused. The people sit down at their work much more than we do. A woman sits to wash and iron, a carpenter sits to plane and saw, and the laborer to chop wood. The law of the road is to turn to the left: this is particularly confusing to the new-comer. The method of counting on the hands is also peculiar: All the fingers are closed. One extends the thumb, two the forefinger, and so on; then six closes the little finger, seven the third finger, and so on; while eleven extends the thumb, and so on. As in China, the last name comes first; so that if a man's name is written Kim Chul Mo, he is Mr. Kim. But he is not addressed in that way; he is called "Kim So-Pang," "Kim Mr." So all titles follow the family name. Hence a gentleman is not called "Count Min," but "Min Count." In reviews the cavalry is drawn up with the tails of the horses to the street. When the four quarters of the compass are mentioned, it is in the order east,

Digitized by Google

west, south, north. So points between are not "south-east," "north-west," but "east-south," "west-north." The farmer's plough throws the furrows to the left, and instead of making his field level he throws it into ridges looking very much like those in a field of cultivated maize. The saws for making planks and boards have their teeth pointed away from the centre, toward the ends, instead of all pointing the one way. Men are accustomed to go out—"take their outings"—in the daytime. After the curfew rings the men retire from the streets and the women go out. In fractions the denominator comes first: not "three-fourths," but "fourths-three," is the order. In entertainments the place of honor is at the left of the host. The seasons are in the same order, but the first three months are spring, the next summer, and so on, irrespective of temperature and the sun's course in the heavens.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the foreigner in Korea needs to exercise care or he will continually outrage the proprieties.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

ATTIRE AND ADORNMENT.

THE traveler who for the first time approaches from the west the eastern shores of Asia is very likely to have his sensibilities considerably shocked. Before he gets in sight of the coast—nay, sometimes a hundred and fifty miles out—he will, if it be night, be surprised at seeing lights scattered over the waters, which will be found to be on board fishing-junks, fleets of which are always out in fine weather. If it be daytime and summer, not only the shape of the boats but the attire of the boatmen will attest the entrance into a different civilization. Crossing in June, the party to which the writer belonged was prepared for what was coming by the appearance of a crew of Japanese, for whose attire certainly a yard of sheeting apiece would have been ample. As we gained the coast and entered the harbor we learned that this was the usual summer costume of the boatmen, since it was the exception to see a man in a more complete dress. After we landed and began to take excursions in the jin-rickshaws we grew accustomed to having the coolies strip off all but the waist-cloth soon after they left town, and nearly all the runners we met

Digitized by Google

were in the same undressed condition. We learned that the Japanese in native employ, in deference to the wishes of their employers, go more fully dressed, and, except the boatmen in the harbor, the people generally in the city do not affect so close an approach to nudity as is the habit in the country districts.

The fabrics of which dress is composed in Korea are cotton—the ordinary unbleached or bleached muslin—silks (native, Japanese and Chinese) and grass cloths; no woollen garments are found there.

Sheep are not raised in the peninsula, except one or two flocks in the neighborhood of the capital and a few in the northern part, near the Chinese border. The resources of the people do not allow them to indulge in woollen goods.

The prevailing color of clothing is, from its nature, white. But the white cotton goods are, for women, often dyed blue, for boys and girls red or pink. The silks are of all colors except black, and the gaudiest materials are made up for the men. Black is used only in the hat. The play of color on a Korean street, especially when viewed from an eminence, is very varied and bright. Green, red, pink, white and blue mingle in kaleidoscopic richness. Sometimes all of these are found in a single costume. In style there is no change. The fashion once set, everybody follows it and sticks to it. An odd commentary on this is the fact that the Chinese, who are the embodiment of conservatism,

Digitized by Google

call the Koreans "old-fashioned"! The present style of dress is conceded to be about four hundred years old, and corresponds with the Chinese costume of the fifteenth century. Since the model for dress is Chinese, not Japanese, nudity does not prevail in Korea.

One of the first matters of concern in the toilet of these people is the hair. The fashion is different for men, boys and women. Boys wear all their hair down their backs in a braid. This must not be confounded with the queue of the Chinese. The Chinaman shaves all the hair except that on the crown. The Korean boy has all his hair braided. In dressing the hair all Koreans use a pomade into the composition of which lampblack or some similar substance enters, since they desire the hair to be as black and shiny as possible. The consequence is that the boys soil sadly the backs and shoulders of their tunics and coats with the braid blowing loosely in the wind. This braid down the back is the sign of the *boy*—that is, of the unmarried or unbetrothed male. As soon as a boy becomes betrothed or married, he is a man, and the transition is shown in the style of dressing the hair. When a wife is chosen for him and his partner for life is engaged, his hair is unbraided, a spot twice as big as a silver dollar is shaved on the top of his head, just forward of the crown, and all the hair is then combed up toward a spot about two inches from the top of the forehead, and there gathered into what foreigners call a "top-knot," but which is named by Koreans the

Digitized by Google

al or "egg." This knot is about two inches high, and sticks up from the head like a little blunt horn. This is wound with a cord so as to keep it in place. The next operation is the binding on of the *mangon*. This is a band about an inch and a half wide, of woven horsehair, which is bound around the head, the bottom of it coming below the middle of the forehead. It is drawn around the head tightly and tied behind. The operation is a painful one, for so tightly is this band or crownless cap drawn that the bottom of it presses deeply into the bones of the skull, and after it has been worn for a season it leaves a permanent crease or depression little less than an eighth of an inch in depth, which can be distinctly traced almost around the head. The purpose of this is to keep the hair in place. One of the pocket toilet articles is a little bone or tortoise-shell implement like a very small paper-knife. With this loose and straggling hairs are stroked up under the band, and in the first month of wearing the *mangon* it is often used to relieve the pain of the pressure upon the skull by being pushed up between the skin and the *mangon*. The pain attendant upon assuming the *mangon* passes away after a month's wearing, and it becomes an almost indispensable article of costume. With this the men frequently wear little pins and combs of tortoise-shell, stained bone or even jade. Once a boy puts this on, he is a man. He has passed beyond the period when he may be addressed with impunity in the "low" or "impolite"

Digitized by Google

forms of speech. He has reached the stage when you must say "Sir" and "Mr." to him.

The women dress their hair in a very neat fashion by parting it in the middle, then combing it straight back and coiling it rather lower on the back of the neck than is done in the Greek coil. Through this a pin is neatly thrust to hold it in place. This pin is sometimes of tortoise-shell, often of silver-plated metal. But one great ambition of a Korean female is to possess a pin of real silver. Such pins are round, about a quarter of an inch in diameter and perhaps five inches long. The head is often decorated with precious stones—jade, pearl or agate. It is commonly the case that women who take service in foreign households as nurses or seamstresses devote a part of their first two or three months' wages to the purchase of one of these pins, costing from four to ten dollars.

The articles of clothing commonly worn are a hat —sometimes two or three even, counting the *mangon*, are worn at one time—a tunic, loose and reaching to the waist; loose, baggy trousers supported by a girdle and gathered in at the knee by leggings which tie at the ankles; stockings padded with cotton; and, over all, a coat the sleeves of which are wide-flowing and reach to the hips or lower, and are sewed up from the bottom to the wrist so as to form very capacious pockets, where merchants often carry goods in astonishing quantities. In these pockets the petty official carries his fan, his

Digitized by Google

handkerchief, his writing-tablets and sundry articles of every-day use. Not to be forgotten are the purse for coins, the knife and the tobacco-pouch and pipe, with flint and tinder or matches, without which no Korean is dressed. In the case of men of high rank, however, these latter articles are carried by his servants, a great retinue of whom attend him. Dealing with each article in turn, we may find matter interesting and novel.

Of all lands in the world, Korea is the land of hats. There is some variety, but no change in style. Excepting the forests of the Amazon, where hats like umbrellas are worn to shed the snakes which rain down from the dense overhanging branches, Korea leads the world in the superficial area of head-gear. Hats may be seen measuring over two feet from rim to crown. Nor is this an uncommon size. But the usual hat is of black woven horsehair, silk or split bamboo, resembling buckram, with straight brim and crown, square on the top, the crown not large enough to fit down upon the head, but kept in place by the crownless hat or *mangon* used in dressing the hair and by ribbons underneath the chin. Some of the mandarins have, instead of ribbons, beautiful strings of amber or tortoise-shell beads. This is the dress hat, corresponding to our derby or our silk hat. Often not merely one hat is worn at a time, but sometimes three go together. First there is the *mangon;* then another indicating that the wearer has "taken the *quaga*" or passed an examination for the rank of

Digitized by Google

"scholar;" and over these the usual straight-brimmed black hat. The *quaga* hat is of peculiar shape, being, as one might say, two-storied. The front part over the forehead is quite low, and the hat rises abruptly from this low part near the centre of the head, so that the back is highest. At the palace the outside hat is discarded, and instead of the *quaga* one of similar shape is used, but with two appendages looking like little wings joining at the back and reaching around loosely to just above the ears. These ear-tabs let loose are said to typify the ear of the servants and courtiers open to the commands of the king. His Majesty wears the same kind of a hat, but in his case the ear-tabs are tied up, as of course there is no one to issue commands to him.

The largest hats are of three varieties: the coolie's, the mourner's and the monk's. The former is very large, nearly equaling the size of the mourner's, but the shape is slightly different. The shape of all three is that of a very flat cone, but the edges differ. The coolie's hat has a straight edge; the monk's is scalloped with the convex outward; while the mourner's hat has scallops with the curve inward. The monk's hat has a much smaller surface, is much thicker and more massive, and the diameter from edge to edge is about eighteen inches. The material is braided rush. The coolie's work-hat is usually of slits of wood, very thin, and is made very much like a splint basket. The mourn-

Digitized by Google





Buddhist Monks and Mourners. Page 140.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

er's hat is larger than either of these, is usually made of straw, and when put on level covers the entire face. These hats all have a framework in the crown so as to fit evenly on the head. The reason assigned by some for the size of the mourner's hat is that Heaven is angry with the family of the deceased, and so the face of the mourner must be hidden from the sky. This hat, with the additional mourner's badge of a narrow strip of grass cloth, twelve inches by eight, fastened to two short reeds and held so as to screen the lower part of the face, makes the entire head of the mourner invisible. It is worn only by male adults. It was by adopting mourners' garb as a disguise that the Roman Catholic missionaries were able to penetrate and stay in the country. Etiquette forbids looking under the hat of a mourner, and this added to their security.

A person in mourning is not allowed inside the palace grounds. Consequently, a death in the family of a courtier necessitates withdrawal from the court for a period of three years, during which time the official is in the garb of sorrow. He may, however, at the command of the king, put off his mourning sooner, especially if His Majesty summon him to the palace. In the case of the death of a member of the royal family the whole nation goes into mourning. Further details as to the mourning garb will be given later.

Other shapes of hats are worn by different classes of people. Soldiers have a uniform hat of rough felt.

Digitized by Google

Keesang wear a hat which is distinctive. On the days of examination the candidates have caps of peculiar shapes which mark them as aspirants. Women wear none except in winter, when they have a fur hat, worn also by boys and men, which is rimless. For them the coat worn as a veil serves instead of hat or bonnet.

In Korea, as in China, it is a mark of respect to keep on the hat in the presence of others. When my teacher, soon after beginning to give me lessons in the language, removed his hat in my presence to adjust his *quaga* hat, he looked askant at me to see whether I knew this was a breach of courtesy. It is said that so peculiar and so nicely settled is the way of wearing the hat that the rank of high officials can be told by the set of the head-gear, it being, in the words of a native, "not too much *so*, nor too much *so*."

The tunic or short jacket is worn in place of a shirt. It has sleeves, and the cut resembles that of a very short sack coat. It is a very easy and comfortable garment. Of the trousers not much need be said. They are loose and baggy, resembling those of zouaves. They are gathered in at the lower part of the leg by leggings, which are fastened quite tightly from knee to ankle. Next come the stockings, which are quite peculiar. They are invariably white, and are made by putting between two thicknesses of cotton sheeting or silk a thick padding of native cotton. They are not clumsy, as one would suppose; on the contrary, they are

Digitized by Google

quite shapely. The padding is necessitated by the construction of the shoes. These latter are of several kinds —of wood, straw, twine, cloth and leather. The straw shoes are often worn without stockings—nearly always so by coolies and by those whose work is dirty and carries them into the streets. Wooden shoes are hewed out of blocks of wood and set on two pieces of timber so as to raise them about three inches above the ground; hence they serve as rain-shoes. This kind is very hard, and of course can not be nicely fitted to the feet. The padded stockings therefore render easy and comfortable what would otherwise be almost unwearable. To walk in these requires considerable practice. A foreign lady who desired one day to step outside the door into the mud thought a pair of these shoes standing at the door very convenient. She put them on and started off, but at the second step found herself pitched forward at full length into the mud. The straw shoes are cheap, a pair costing less than a cent, but of course they do not last long. They may serve for one day's travel if the road be not too rough. The twine shoes are of various degrees of fineness, the best being very shapely and pretty, and they are kept very white by washing and the application of whitening. They are held on by the big toe's being thrust through a hole left for that purpose in the shoe; the heel also binds just behind the ankle. A rawhide sole is often sewed on, making them very durable. The heels are not built

Digitized by Google

up as they are on our shoes. The leather and cloth articles are not raised from the ground, but have very thick soles with hob-nails on the bottom. They are very neat in appearance, and look as though they might be worn with comfort by any one. A very short trial by a European, however, makes evident the necessity for padded stockings, for they are full of prominences and bunches which would soon produce blisters or corns. Courtiers and officials when going to the palace wear a short boot of dark cloth or felt, which, so far as ascertained, is worn nowhere else. Upon going into a house a Korean leaves his shoes at the door and enters in his stocking feet, and servants move about in the house shoeless and noiselessly. To one who has lived in Japan, and has been annoyed by the scuffling of the servants' shoes, unfastened at the heel, the relief is great. There the house-slipper is simply a flat mat of woven straw with a small loop in front, which is grasped between the first and second toes. The result is that the front or toe of the slipper is lifted from the floor, but the heel scrapes and rubs it, producing a sound anything but soothing to weak nerves. The Korean fashion is decidedly an improvement upon the style in Japan.

The coats are made in several shapes. One is very much like the full-dress evening "clawhammer" style with the tails greatly lengthened. Another is like an exaggerated sack coat with the flowing sleeves already mentioned. The color of these is often white; for boys,

Digitized by Google

especially those engaged to be married, pink; sometimes a pale blue is the shade, and not seldom green. Often two or three coats made of silks of different colors are worn at once, the effect sometimes being very pretty, often very odd. The winter overcoat is made of the same materials, but is padded with cotton and quilted. Those worn by the wealthy are often trimmed, and occasionally lined, with fur of the sable or mink. For winter wear the tunic and trousers also are padded and quilted, so that people endure well the severe cold of their steady cold season.

The dress of women differs only slightly from that above described. They use the same shoes, wooden and leather, as the men, the same padded stockings, the same trousers and leggings, but over them a full skirt generally colored blue (girls usually wear pink) and falling below the knee.

Most of the women seen in the streets are models of neatness, their shoes, stockings, skirts and leggings shining like encrusted snow in the sunshine. They are fond of adornment, and are skilled in the use of powder to whiten the skin. They wear not one wedding-ring but two, and these of silver, very thick and massive. Exceedingly few of them have gold ornaments.

The most peculiar article of woman's wear is the coat worn over the head. This is made of green or blue cloth or silk. The account of the origin of this

Digitized by Google

custom is that in former times the country was exposed to assaults from different quarters, and men were often summoned hastily from their employments to take the field against the enemy, not having time to go to their homes for extra clothing. Under these circumstances women made coats for their husbands, and went with the men to their work, wearing the garments thrown loosely over their heads, that at a moment's notice they might hand to the men the needed extra wraps. Whatever the truth of the story, that is evidently not the purpose for which they are now worn; for outside of the fact that the coats are too small for wear as a protection from cold, they would be of little use, so light is their material. The prettiness of the story reconciles one to the ugliness of the spectacle presented by the mummy-like figures stalking around the streets with faces hidden and empty sleeves flapping derisively, if not suggestively, from about the region of the ears.

Mention should not be omitted of the court-dress of officials, which, in addition to the items already described, consists of a dark-green overcoat, on the back and breast of which is worn a square of cloth upon which figures are embroidered. These figures are either cranes or tigers, the former denoting civil rank, the latter military. All officials below a certain grade may wear only one of these figures; all above that grade wear two. In addition to these signs of rank, there is another, worn on the *mangon* behind the ear. The

Digitized by Google

cham-way wears a white button, usually of jade, while all above *cham-pan* sport the gold button. When His Majesty honors a foreigner with native official rank, he often sends with this the badges of the rank as a present.

In summer natives have a peculiar device for keeping cool. Next the body is worn a framework made of split bamboo woven in fancy designs. This is so made that it is supported from the shoulders and springs out from the body. It therefore holds the tunic away from the person, and permits the air to penetrate beneath the clothing and circulate freely. On the arms are also worn cuffs woven of horsehair, which serve the same purpose for the arms.

The color of mourning is a dull straw hue. Garments for mourners are often made of grass cloth, which has that shade. For rain-coats some Koreans have overgarments or capes made of straw or grass so woven as to shed the rain like the thatch of a roof. This garment is very common in Japan—more so than in Korea. The usual means of keeping off the rain is a mackintosh made of oiled paper, which is excellently adapted for its purpose. Instead of an umbrella a sort of roof of the same material is used, which is put on a framework of bamboo, adjustable over the ordinary hat. The rain thus falls upon the coat, and thence is carried to the ground. Rain-shoes are also made, covered with the same material and then varnished.

Digitized by Google

As already related, the materials range, according to the wealth of the wearer, from a very coarse and cheap grass cloth to fine Chinese silks.

When all is said, and it is remembered that the prevailing color is white, and that clothing is therefore easily soiled and bears the mark of every spot, it must be admitted that Koreans are not so dirty as some would claim. Mechanics after a day's work wash themselves and put on clean clothes before going home, and after that, on their way, look like gentlemen of leisure taking an evening stroll.

Watches are worn, like the knife, hanging from the belt. Usually they are enclosed in an embroidered holder very much like that used by many gentlemen to fix the watch in at the bed-side at night. Sometimes they are carried in a little detachable pocket, like a lady's embroidered hand-bag, which is attached to the girdle.

A comparison of the dress of Koreans and Japanese as seen every day among the working-classes is largely in favor of the former as regards modesty. At the same time, if we except the Korean gentlemen in full attire, we cannot claim for the former the element of the picturesque as it exists in Japan.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

WOMAN AND HER WORK.

FROM the seclusion of the women it might be inferred that in the social and political economy of the country they had little to do. In perhaps nothing else has so mistaken an impression gotten abroad. So, too, it has been supposed that they were nonentities at home. They have no part in the educational system. While we hear now and again of educated females, and while such figure in the fictions and tales of the peninsula, it is in such a way as clearly to show that they are the exceptions, and are the wonder of their connections. The way in which a maiden is disposed of in marriage by her parents seems to leave her little of independence; and the fact that she may be divorced or deserted by her husband, with no redress, would seem to leave her pitiably situated. Yet a number of facts make it clear that her position is by no means so bad as might be supposed. It has already been shown that she is addressed with respect. Her husband and her children use what are called the polite or honorific forms in speaking to her. It is the habit of the men to consult their wives in matters of business, and the native shrewdness of the weaker sex

Digitized by Google

is often manifested in the disposal of spare capital. Most people in Korea find, sooner or later, that the king pays good heed to Her Majesty's suggestions, and at times she does the talking, of course from behind a screen. In a word, in Cho Son, as in America, the lady of the house is a very important personage, and can do much to make home comfortable or the reverse, as she holds the key to the situation. Naturally, from the peculiarity of their mode of life and from the seclusion which limits them to the female apartments, boldness is not a trait of Korean women. Of the few women seen by the author during his residence in Korea, only two, and they were *keesang* (dancing-girls), were anything but modest. The only native women who visited our house in other than a menial capacity were patterns of modesty and of charming simplicity. One of these, the wife of my instructor in Korean, was an example of wifely devotion. Every word of her husband evoked a coy smile, and evidently he was to her the acme of perfection. At the same time, it was clear that she was the darling of his heart. Nothing appeared wanting to complete their happiness but a little one to call out the parental affection. The fondness of the fathers for children, as made evident wherever one went in the city or country, was certain proof that the *mariage de convenance* as practiced in Korea is not as unfortunate in its results as is said to be the case in our own land.

Digitized by Google

The labors of a woman in Korea lie in much the same direction as in the United States. She is queen of the kitchen and laundry. She is seamstress and tailor, and she varies the monotony of her existence by embroidering in silk the badges of rank of her husband. The *cuisine* of the Korean is very limited. Rice is the staple, and that in a boiled state. Soup is as common as gravy is in our own country, and serves much the same purpose. Meat is not so common as with us, and when used is generally broiled. But with the aid of vegetables, and especially the red pepper (not so pungent as is that vegetable with us), she makes a variety of dishes which seems to satisfy the appetite of her family. Some housewives there, as here, are noted for their skill in making certain dishes; and one of the most envied of accomplishments is the concocting of a dish which is about as savory in its odor as the sauer-kraut of the Germans, and which is said to resemble it in its taste and composition. One of the tribulations of Korean brides is the reminiscence by the husband of the choice dishes his mother used to present. Canning and preserving of fruit are not practiced by them, for sugar is almost unknown. Candy is made from honey and various seeds and beans. Some of their fruits, notably the persimmon, are dried, and form the relishes of many a meal. Bread-making in none of its branches bears the slightest resemblance to our methods. Koreans have no flour-mills, so far as I have seen. Hand-mills similar

Digitized by Google

to those used in Palestine are used for cracking and taking off the hulls of peas and beans, but flour is literally pounded out in a large mortar hewn out of wood. Wheat is grown only in small patches, and is a late acquisition from the Occident. In the mortars used are employed two kinds of pestles. One of them is made of hard, well-seasoned oak, small in the middle, and is reversible—either end may be used. This kind is generally handled by a woman. The other is in the shape of a large hammer, the head a foot or more in length, two or two and a half inches square, and is of stone or iron with a wooden handle. This is wielded by a man, and is a heavy and cumbrous implement. In this way a very fine quality of flour is made. What is called bread is made of *rice* flour, and does not resemble our staff of life; with Koreans it does not occupy so large a place as does bread in our dietary. Rice is their principal food. In making rice bread no leaven is used. It is made principally by the men, and requires adult muscle. After the flour is mixed with water the dough thus made is laid on a platform about the size of a door, and then kneaded by being beaten with heavy wooden mallets having long handles and swung over the shoulders of stalwart men. A woman often helps by keeping the dough turned, deftly curling the edges between the strokes of the mallet. It is thus beaten into a mass that is soggy beyond description. To a European it looks, and doubtless is, thor-

Digitized by Google

oughly indigestible. After the kneading it is cut or chopped into strips, rolled into pieces about the size of sausages and toasted over a charcoal fire. Koreans are a dyspeptic folk, and the bread they eat would fully account for all their trials. A sort of muffin is made by boiling maize until it is soft, running it through a mill which mashes it into pulp, drying it out and toasting it as muffins. There is no butter used—cows are not kept for their milk.

But, all things considered, cooking occupies only a modicum of the Korean wife's time. Her most wearying and incessant labor is at the laundry. The most of this is done away from home. It has been explained that the water for household uses is generally supplied by the water-carrier, who is paid for his services. Economy is so necessary in family life that the supply of water obtained in this way is limited to the demands of the *cuisine* and the bath. Washing is done, therefore, at the well-side, by the side of the street or by the side of a brook or river. Even the main sewer, at places where the mountain stream which flows through it runs less laden with filth than elsewhere, is utilized for this purpose. The early riser would, in a walk through the streets of the capital, meet many a woman with a bundle of clothes on her head and her face covered with her little coat, on her way to a meadow or stream outside the walls, to do the family washing. There are several places outside the city where the lay

Digitized by Google

of the land is favorable for this purpose, and which on almost any bright day appear almost white with the linen laid on the grass or on bushes to dry. Hither the women come with their little paddles, about a foot long and three inches wide, and at a stone worn smooth by constant use they squat or kneel. Here, in a hollow in the brook's bed, they dip the clothes, and then, laying them on the stone, proceed to beat out the marks of wear, turning the clothing now and again to bring uncleansed spots under the paddle. They beat in time, as though to a tune, and dextrously change the paddle from one hand to the other without losing a stroke. As buttons are little used, or are made of knots of thread or braid, the paddles do no harm to the clothing. Lines are little used for drying purposes: the clothes are spread out upon rocks or grass or bushes until ready to be taken in. This is the method of washing, winter and summer. In winter, of course, they have to break through the ice to get the water, and doubtless much suffering is experienced at that season, though I never heard a complaint in the matter. It might be supposed that this method of washing would be hard on the fabric. But though Korean clothes are often of thin texture, the paddle seems less destructive than our own way of rubbing. Against its effectiveness nothing can be said, for nowhere is there a more glowing whiteness produced in the laundry. Starch made of rice is used for producing stiffness and body. Especially interesting is their

Digitized by Google



Returning from Washing. Page 155.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

method of ironing. In the first place, the "irons" are made of wood, and, instead of being flat, are round and resemble a shortened base-ball bat. The table, instead of being a flat board, is a wooden roller about three to six inches in diameter, around which the article is wound. They do not heat the "irons," but, instead, sometimes heat the flat stone on which the "ironing-board" rests. Instead of steady pressure to smooth out the wrinkles, the ironing is done by quick, sharp raps, like those of a drummer. By the rate of the taps it can often be told whether the man of the house has one or two wives. If two women are ironing, they alternate their strokes, beating with a rhythmic motion rather lulling in its effects if not too close. The roll is often turned by a little maiden who sits at the end to perform this labor. Add to the above that most of the ironing is done at night, and what more antipodal to our own methods can be imagined? It should be said that in this way a beautiful polish is produced, and no injury to the fabric seems to result.

It has already been stated that in the country there seems to be less strictness in regard to the seclusion of women. It is therefore not unusual to see a woman in the field, assisting in the work of cultivation. They assist in the gathering of the crops, and often in preparing them for use. But far less out-door work is done by Korean women than by their sisters in Japan.

In sewing the women are very neat. They are ex-

Digitized by Google

tremely deliberate. Not much is accomplished in a day, but what is done is well done. Some specimens of quilted silk have called forth loud encomiums from those who have inspected them. Korean garments are always very neatly made. As embroiderers Koreans are not particularly skillful. They are far behind the Japanese in this respect. As in the production of landscapes by painting, so in embroidery everything is stereotyped. The way of representing rocks is repeated in each piece of work. While in the representation of birds, bats and butterflies they are wonderfully true to nature, and in reproducing such striking figures as the bamboo and various flowers they are accurate, the general effect of their work is tame and uninteresting. Embroiderers who, according to Korean notions, are skilled are kept at work in the palace embroidering panels for screens. These screens are sometimes presented to officials, and thence occasionally find their way through the medium of a commission merchant into foreigners' hands. In this way the writer became possessed of one regarded by Koreans as peculiarly handsome. In both sewing and embroidery the thimble, made of cardboard covered with silk or cotton, is worn on the index finger. Doubtless this accounts for the slowness with which the work is done.

The disposition of the women in Korea is reverent, and it is among them that the Romanists have made their best progress. Their congregations in Seoul num-

Digitized by Google

ber sometimes over five hundred. They are exceedingly earnest, and are most zealous in their advocacy of the Christian religion. Too much cannot be said to contradict the notion that has gained currency that the female sex is considered as beneath the strong and sturdy male. The fact has already been noted that even the husband, who in one book is said to converse only occasionally with his wife, "whom he regards as being far beneath him," applies honorific language when addressing her. I found no traces of any other state of things. While *keesang* are spoken to in "impolite" language, married women are addressed with respect. And this is not merely external usage. The children respect women and are generally obedient. Whoever has noticed the quickness of children to mark any lack of respect to a person in authority, and to presume on that deficiency, will see at once how strong a proof this respect of children is of the high position of the mother. At the same time, in fairness there must be admitted, on the other side, the fact that a man may divorce his wife by simple repudiation. Yet recourse to this is exceedingly rare. It necessarily carries with it some publicity, and that, in matters pertaining to the household, is the very last thing to be desired. In some of the very few cases where this method was known to the writer to have been taken to get rid of a wife, the couples afterward became reconciled.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

AMENITIES AND SOLEMNITIES.

ENOUGH has been said in preceding chapters to show that the Koreans, while gravity is a prominent characteristic, are yet by no means loath to have fun. While not as volatile in spirits as the Japanese, they are yet not so stolid as the Chinese. They "love their little joke," and recreation is as dear to them as their food. From the small toddler who can scarcely stand to the gray-haired minister of state, all like fun and do their share in making it. The children of such a people are not likely to suffer from want of amusement. One going through the streets of the city or along the roads will find much the same diversity of games as is seen in our own land, and each game has its appropriate season. At one time of the year the sky will be dotted with kites; at another season not a kite will be in sight. But it must not be supposed that the children have nothing to do but play. By far the most of the Koreans read their own language, and a large proportion read and write Chinese; hence a portion of the children's time must be spent in school. This institution is altogether different from ours.

Digitized by Google

There is, in the government, no department of instruction, having the care of the education of the people. Instruction is a private enterprise. A school can always be located by the noise it makes. Children there, as in China, study aloud; and some say the greater the volume of sound, the greater the industry of the scholars. With this as the principle of study, it is easy to imagine how fifteen or twenty scholars can make the air hum. Girls are not found at the schools. While many of them read the vernacular, and some even understand Chinese, they have to acquire their knowledge from scholarly brothers or parents. But the most of their energies are confined to tending the baby at home or in the street or in assisting the mother in the care of the house. The time not filled with these occupations may be employed in seeking fun in the streets. But at best the play-time of the girls is a short one, for at the age of twelve they are marriageable, and for some months at least before that time must be confined to the women's quarters, out of sight of the men; thenceforward their view of the world is confined to what they can see through the square inch or two of glass set in the paper window of the house, or from under the collar of the little coat worn as a veil over the head, which they wear whenever they appear in the streets. Babies are tended very much in the same way as in Japan—tied on the backs of older children, who play in the gutter or wherever their fancy takes them,

Digitized by Google

in happy indifference to the load they carry. Thus tied on, the babies sleep or cry or laugh with but little attention from the older children who carry them. It is not at all unusual to see a boy flying a kite while the baby on his back gazes at the bright thing in the air or sleeps with its little head thrown back to a position in which dislocation of the neck seems imminent.

By far the most popular amusement is that of flying kites. To fly the Korean kite involves an amount of skill far exceeding that called for by the American species. The name given kites is *yun*, and they are of peculiar construction. They are nearly square, constructed of thin pieces of bamboo covered with tough paper, with a hole left in the centre, and connected with the line by three pieces of string joined to the sides near the top and to the centre of the bottom. It requires a nice degree of skill and practice so to attach the line as to make the kite balance. A spot near the top indicates to the owner when the kite is right side up in its plunges—something most necessary to know in order to ensure its safety. It generally has no tail, and is therefore very unsteady in its movements until a great amount of line is out. In taking in and letting out line the Korean contrivance used is far ahead of our own. All who fly kites use a reel which resembles in miniature the paddle-wheel of a steamboat. The axis is prolonged on one side to form the handle, and the paddles reach beyond the axis on

Digitized by Google

the other side. To let out line it is necessary only to hold the reel with the axis parallel to the line, when the latter runs off by the pressure of the kite. To take in line, the boy turns the axis across the line, grasps the end of a paddle with one hand and the handle with the other, and whirls the whole around, taking in line at a rapid rate. (The same arrangement is used in fishing with line and hook.)

To fly an American, English, Japanese or Chinese kite is a much easier task than to operate the Korean article. One holiday the three "American teachers" tried their hands at this, and, having flown kites at home, anticipated no difficulty. They had noticed the antics and gestures used by natives in manipulating the string, but supposed this to be the effect of the Koreans' natural demonstrativeness. But another opinion gained ground, as the only success achieved on that occasion was the loss of several kites, which by their plunging were cast down into neighboring grounds and became the prey of the ubiquitous small boy. The absence of a tail makes these playthings unsteady, and in letting out the line the kite generally makes a series of plunges, which must be controlled by the promptest action, guided by a remarkably quick eye. But the feature of kite-flying in the peninsula is the fact that men and boys of all ages indulge in the pastime. The "kite-fights" are an absorbing part of the sport. To witness one of these the shopkeeper will often stop

Digitized by Google

serving a customer and risk losing a sale, though as a rule the customer is as eager as any one to see the fun. A kite-fight is carried on as follows: Some man or boy, seeing a kite in the air the string of which passes in a way favorable to the undertaking, determines to have some fun and raise a little excitement. He brings out his own kite, gets it up, runs out the string to a proper distance and then so manœuvres it as to run it athwart the string of the kite he wishes to bring down. It frequently happens that the man at the end of the string of the other kite is equally adroit, and he will make his kite dodge and twist so as to evade the attack. When once the two lines meet, they become entangled, and the kites dash and curvet in the air, and dive and plunge at each other in such a way as easily to suggest to the imagination that they are alive. After entanglement the object is either to capture the enemy's kite by hauling it down where it can be seized, and with it as much of the line as can be secured, or to saw the string so as to sever it and cause the loss of the opposing kite. It requires skillful strategy to accomplish this, for the chances are even that the aggressor's kite will be lost. At times entanglement does not follow, for the swoop of the attacking kite is so sudden and swift that the line of the attacked kite is cut through as with a knife. So great is the interest in these encounters in the air that sometimes a thousand people gather and look on in breathless

Digitized by Google

excitement and with keenest interest, which they show by their ejaculations and cries of encouragement or dismay as one or the other scores a point or wins the game. This diversion reaches its height during the New Year's holidays and on the fifteenth day of the first month, when men and boys in great numbers indulge in the sport and others innumerable watch the spectacle. Toward night the strings, one by one, are cut, and the kites fly away, bearing from their owners any ill luck that may have befallen them.

A game ranking next in popularity is one peculiar to Korea. Some tufts of pliable grass are tied together at the centre and curled up so as to resemble a chestnut-burr or a small worsted ball about the size of a burr. This is thrown into the air, and is kept there untouched by the hands, by means of kicks deftly administered. The feat requires much practice, but boys twelve years of age have been seen to keep the thing in the air for eight minutes. The kick is not from the toe or front of the foot, but sidewise, the ball hitting the foot just below the ankle. A variation of this is made by having a coin tied in paper, the string brought tightly down to the coin, when the paper left loose acts as the feather on an arrow, and the weighted end falls first. With this plaything two, three or more persons play, kicking it in turn from one to another. This form of the game is popular among the men, and at Chong No, the part of the capital which corresponds to the Wall Street of New

Digitized by Google

York City, it is seen at its best. With it the brokers of the capital make what corresponds to the "horse-play" of the Wall Street operators.

In summer children find no little fun in pelting the dogs. Being Korean, of course they do this in a peculiar way. The instrument of torture is a plaything shaped like an L, the lower part of which is a slim blade of iron or a piece of stout wire, while the handle is round and perhaps two feet long. With the point of the iron they pick up in the streets pieces of garbage, bits of potato, pieces of turnip or radish or lumps of mud, and then, taking careful aim, propel the missile at the animal by striking sharply the handle of the sickle or L against the raised leg. The projectile passes beneath the leg and often hits the object aimed at. Naturally, this sometimes brings the small boy into conflict with the owner of the dog, but that only adds to the spice of life, and does not deter from the sport. Of course there are bad little boys in Korea, as elsewhere, and sometimes these naughty boys aim at larger game. Occasionally the stately steppings of some lordly and dignified adult are checked or accelerated by the sharp tap of a mud ball or an unsavory morsel propelled as by a catapult from the vigorous arm and leg of an urchin who is invisible.

In the winter and early spring a favorite amusement is jumping the rope. In this sport the Korean children, boys and girls, compare not unfavorably with Western

Digitized by Google

children, and have introduced complexities into the game, some like and others unlike those seen in the United States and England. The children are lithe and agile, and display an endurance utterly beyond what we should look for in the East. At the same time of year the see-saw is very much in vogue, but it is different from that so much used by little Westerners. In Korea a strong warped board or plank is placed, hollow upward, upon a bunch of straw or on bags filled with sand, so as to raise it from the ground a foot or so. Alongside of this, and at the proper height for children to reach, is stretched a rope which the jumpers seize and retain while they play. On the ends of this warped board two children stand, the heavier jumping from the board and alighting upon it again, by the impact sending the other child into the air. The child thus propelled alights with all the impetus possible upon its end of the board, and in two or three jumps the two will be rising into the air as high as six feet. The exercise is much more violent than in the American game, and frequent rests are necessary. It requires more skill, greater nerve, keener sight and nicer powers of balancing. The result to the muscles and nerves must be, when played in moderation, exceedingly beneficial.

Pitching coins is a favorite amusement with young and old. Many a time a little knot may be seen collected around two boys who are the champions of their

Digitized by Google

districts, engaged in settling a dispute as to their skill in tossing. Boys may also be seen whipping tops along the streets, but the ordinary cord-top has not yet made its way into the country. Sliding has its devotees in Korea, as in America, and limbs are in as great danger in the streets of Cho Son as on our own smoothly-paved sidewalks. The wooden shoes speedily make the roads and little sheets of ice slippery enough to cause the most homesick of New Yorkers or Brooklynites to feel thoroughly at home. The make of the native shoes prevents the development of any sport like our skating, but that sport as practiced by foreigners is greatly admired by the natives. At any time, in the vicinity of the capital, crowds of from five hundred to two thousand can be collected in a short time around the rice-paddies or ponds where skaters are enjoying the ice. This pastime having been mentioned once in the presence of the queen by Her Majesty's lady physician, a desire was expressed to see how it was done. An invitation was given to the skaters of the capital to bring their skates and give an exhibition. This invitation was accepted by quite a number. The place appointed was one of the little lakes in the palace grounds, circular in form, about seventy yards in diameter, with a pretty little summer house on an island in the centre. In this latter were the king and queen with their attendants, hidden by screens, but themselves able to see, and doubtless they were eager and interested spectators.

Digitized by Google

Grandees of various grades watched the evolutions and shouted applause and encouragement. Her Majesty was especially interested in an ice-chair gotten up for the occasion, used by several of the ladies who were not skaters. One of our number was an expert trick and figure skater, and the climax of interest was reached when he jumped over a chair while going at full speed. A buzz of astonishment reached the ears of the skaters, which presumably came from their majesties and their attendants. When skating is enjoyed elsewhere, the spectators are of lower rank. As the skaters pass through the streets, word is passed along from urchin to urchin, and also among the adults, that foreigners are on the road to the ice. In a very few moments a crowd of a thousand collects, and it is a constant wonder to them how movements so graceful and fleet can be made on a footing apparently so treacherous. One gentleman, at the time spoken of, was learning, and the information was often heard given to newcomers, "Those great men are very skillful, but this one is just learning." So quickly did the natives become connoisseurs!

This gathering to see a new or strange sight is very characteristic of the Koreans. One of their most common words is *koo-gyung*, sight-seeing. They are exceedingly fond of spectacles. Accordingly, whenever the king and prince leave the palace for an outing or for purposes of worship, or on other occasions, the day

Digitized by Google

is a holiday; the opportunity is seized for making a display, and the people gather to witness the sights. It is quite usual for a number of the foreigners to go to see the sights, although, like Barnum's parade, repetition wearies one. For the foreigners some choice position is usually secured. Countrymen generally come to town in great numbers on such occasions, and very often congregate in front of the rendezvous of the white strangers. To many of them a part of the sights of the day is a glimpse of the foreigners, and they are especially pleased at the romps and fun of the fair-faced children. But sometimes, while laughing and commenting upon the ways of the foreigners, they will be dispersed by an advance file of soldiers who march down the street, and then they have to betake themselves to the cross-streets or flatten themselves against the houses that line the streets. The show or *kur-dong* is coming. Natives struggle for the best positions, and foreigners settle themselves to explain to newcomers the sights or to compare the display with that seen on former occasions. Coolies are carrying baskets of soil, which they place at intervals along the middle of the streets through which the king is to pass. Squads of soldiers and officials pass up and down, to see that all is in proper condition. When the head of the procession is seen, gay with flags and streamers, an old official may be seen to pass along on horseback, superintending the strewing of the baskets of dirt

Digitized by Google

down the middle of the street. The tradition is that His Majesty's person is sacred, and he must not be carried over soil trodden by the foot of common men. Virgin soil must be beneath his royal soles. After this comes the procession proper—companies of soldiers of varied sorts, footmen and cavalry, spearsmen, swordsmen and bowmen; captains and generals guarded by files of soldiers, each one held on his horse by men on either side of him, and the horse led by a groom. The little horses are tipped out with brass-bedecked coverings. Officials are in their most gorgeous robes. Flags stream in the wind. Men armed with poles or paddles pass along the sides of the street, pushing or striking the people with the poles or paddling them with the paddles to keep the way clear, and sometimes singling out some unfortunate individual for severe punishment in this way. Some of the troops of swordsmen in the cavalry wear coats with red sleeves, the object of which is said to be that in battle they may wipe their bloody swords on the sleeves and not be sickened by the gory stain. Emblematic flags and standards borne on bloody fields are carried with the ranks of soldiery. Now comes a body of tiger-hunters, bearing the native match-lock or flint-lock weapons—men to whom fear is said to be unknown; who else dare beard the royal man-eater in his lair? Clad as they are in flowing and picturesque uniforms of blue, with dark, broad-brimmed hats adorned with red tassels, they present a striking appearance. It

Digitized by Google

may be that right behind them marches, in company front, a regiment of infantry armed with breech-loading Remingtons and sabre bayonets, and dressed in what is supposed to be foreign-fashioned uniforms. The generals look ridiculously helpless, supported by their attendants, and they are said to go into battle held on their horses. Civil officers are attended by huge retinues of servants; and one of the novel sights was an official who, instead of being carried in a chair on the shoulders of men, rode a unicycle, the seat being over the wheel. The official was held up by servants on each side, while the motive power was furnished by coolies who pushed and pulled at poles passed through the bottom of the chair or seat. One has fair time to get wearied watching troop after troop of cavalry mounted on ridiculously small horses, company after company of infantry armed with mediæval or modern weapons, bodies of spearmen and clubmen and swordsmen, companies of bowmen and others, before the noise made by a company of buglers announces the approach of the king. It is a curious fact that wherever the king goes, this band of buglers accompanies him, blowing marches which are identical with those used in guard-mounting in our own garrisons. But before the king is always carried a large chair borne by eighteen men, with no one in it. This chair is exactly like the one His Majesty occupies. The custom originated in the times when the king was always carried in a closed chair. Once when the monarch was

Digitized by Google

going out a conspiracy had been formed, and through the chair which was supposed to contain him arrows were shot with the purpose of assassinating him. But he happened to be in another chair, and so escaped. Ever since that occasion an empty chair has been borne in the royal procession, and as long as closed ones were used it was not known in which one the king rode. But since the ruler of the kingdom began to ride in open chairs the custom has been maintained, not that it was of any use, but was simply a reminiscence of the ancient attempt at regicide. It is an instance of the persistence of a ceremony after the occasion demanding it has passed away. Many such instances exist. The king himself is borne in a large open chair raised aloft in the air, for none may look down upon His Majesty. He is in full view of all who choose to look, though the natives are accustomed to bow the head as he passes. To foreigners when present in a body he almost always shows the courtesy of stopping the chair a moment as he passes. If during an outing he passes foreigners to whom he has granted audience, and even others whom he knows only by reputation, he generally recognizes them by a gracious bow and a very pleasant smile. After him is usually carried a second empty chair, and following that comes one which bears the prince, who generally accompanies his father. After them go other bodies of soldiers, nearly a repetition of what precedes.

I know of no occasion in the United States when the

Digitized by Google

display of color is so varied and magnificent as in the Korean capital on the day of the king's outing. The varied suits of the troops, the gorgeous standards and flags embroidered with silks, the gay trappings of the horses and the brilliant clothing of the courtiers, flanked by the gala dress of the natives, make a kaleidoscopic picture probably not to be equaled elsewhere in the world, unless, perhaps, in India. This, then, is one of the occasions which the native seizes for a holiday, and which is an excuse for donning his best apparel. It is also a means for the king to exhibit himself to the populace and keep himself in their favor. As he goes out four or five times a year, he succeeds in maintaining his popularity, and at the same time, by being unapproachable by the masses except at such times, the "majesty which doth hedge a king" is easily supported, and with it the awe of the common people for the august ruler of the kingdom, the "favorite of Heaven."

These spectacle-loving people have their propensities indulged by the traveling troupes of rope-dancers, tumblers and clowns who come from the southern province of Chul-la-do. The dancers are generally boys, whose walking on tight ropes of straw and balancing without balancing-poles on slack ropes are well worth witnessing. They intersperse with their performances jokes cracked at the expense of bystanders, which are taken in good part by their victims. The tumblers, often

Digitized by Google

adults, are very good performers, turning hand-springs and somersaults of all varieties, with all sorts of horse-play thrown in. These troupes are sometimes engaged by officials to perform in public, and the foreign friends of the host are invited to witness the performance. Another spectacle, which reminds one of the stories told of the mystery or miracle plays of England, collects crowds of people in places where the hollows in the hillsides form natural theatres. The players, in hideous masks, personate legendary and mythical characters, and the performance lasts for two or three days. The object of these it seems difficult to learn, and, curiously enough, they are not visited by the mandarins or gentlemen of the vicinity. They seem to be frowned upon by the orthodox Confucian. No collection is taken up and no fee demanded.

But all the rage in the late winter and early spring is the game which stirs up the most life and engages the most zeal that Koreans ever display. This is the stone-fight. In England a similar game is often engaged in between boys of rival districts. In Korea boys and men participate in it, the former in emulation of the latter. Villages are generally built around the bases and part way up the sides of the rolling hills and spurs of the mountains. Often between two villages thus situated there is a large level stretch, and this is made an annual battle-ground. The sport usually begins in good humor, often continues so to the end,

Digitized by Google

but not unfrequently engenders bad blood and arouses angry passions. The sides engaged are proportioned to the size of the villages, the largest number I have seen on a side being estimated at from eight hundred to one thousand; but fights are seen where not more than a dozen in all participate. The game is begun by the boys, sometimes early in the afternoon, and there is desultory fighting until toward evening. Then the men begin to arrive and take a hand, and the battle becomes sharp. The end comes soon after sunset. The weapons employed are stones and clubs, the stones being thrown from the hand or from slings made of straw string. The clubs are short and stout, and can be wielded, as they occasionally are, so as to cause instant death. The fight is begun by a few of each side collecting near the centre of the ground, between the two villages. Stones are thrown and challenges shouted, each party exhorting the other with badinage and repartee to retire from the field while it can do so with safety. As the fighters collect, bystanders from near and from far gather, generally out of reach of danger, though occasionally a stone will drop among them from the erratic sling of a participant. The distance between the sides is usually a little more than a stone's throw, but ahead of the main body are adventurous spirits who look like a line of skirmishers, and who harass the enemy by throwing stones from hand and sling into the densest masses. Charges and counter-charges are made, those armed with clubs lead-

Digitized by Google

ing the attack, backed by the masses who throw stones; on the opposing side the clubbers stay to meet the attack, while the vanguard of the assailants is harassed by the sharpshooters of the party attacked. When a charge is to be made, it is signalled by a loud chorus of *kah*'s (equivalent to our slang phrase "git"), and when this sound, resembling the noise of a flock of crows, arises, the other side usually retreats in full run until sufficient courage has been gained to stop and face the foe. When the retreating party turns and sees a few rash and daring men far in advance of their support, the answering *kah* comes from their side, and then begins the counter-charge, which may be met or may recover the ground lost. In the biggest fight witnessed by the writer, when perhaps two thousand men and boys were engaged, one side charged and drove their opponents half-way back to their village. A sudden rally was made, the signal given and more than the lost ground recovered by a grand rush. After a moment's breathing-spell the rush was continued, the first assailants were driven in among their houses, and had to watch in helpless rage while their opponents stoned and tore down an out-building so as to leave a mark in the enemy's camp of the grand rush thus made. This of course created hard feeling: some were heard to say that on the morrow they would collect "many men, and whip the miscreants severely." Sometimes these stone-fights become more than mere sport, and are the

Digitized by Google

occasions when the bad blood existing between the villages is let out. It is said that they are reminiscences of the times when each village furnished a contingent for the army, and the neighboring hamlets vied with each other as to which could produce the strongest and bravest set of men. The first months of the year are devoted to this mimic warfare. Occasionally, so large are the numbers engaged, so great the noise made and so dangerous to life is the game that the thing comes to the king's ears, and he has to give orders that the fighting shall cease. It is a wonder that so few are hurt; but when we remember that the participants wear their winter clothes, including a long, flowing overcoat padded with cotton, the danger is seen to be much less than at first seems to be the case. A traveler who visits Korea and does not see one of these fights misses one of the most characteristic sights to be witnessed among this strange people.

The Koreans are exceedingly fond of the hills. The consequence is that the South Mountain (the North Mountain is included in the palace grounds, and hence is not open to the public) is a great place of resort for the people. In the spring, summer and autumn, on almost any fine day little companies may be seen rambling over the mountain or reclining under the trees, sometimes sitting on the wall of the city and enjoying the exceedingly fine view to be had south, toward the river. Sometimes one of the company will have with

Digitized by Google

him a musical instrument which is a compound of the clarionet and the cornet, the mouth-piece and stem being of reed and bamboo and the flare or end of brass. This instrument is frightfully loud, and when experts upon it come to the houses of foreigners to play they usually retire behind an out-building, in order that the sound may reach the ear only after being muffled by passing through the enclosing buildings. At such times crowds of people gather to hear the music, and it is often difficult to keep the mob out of the grounds, so great is their fondness for the sounds evoked from the instrument. At dinners "music" is furnished by a band, but upon Western ears the impression is decidedly unpleasant. Their instruments are Chinese in origin, are very imperfect, and the music is in a minor key. But while the South Mountain is a favorite resort, being well wooded, it is not the only one. Upon all the hills in the neighborhood of the capital are well-worn paths, and at all times men and boys may be seen, solitary, in couples or in companies, strolling along or resting on a rock, happy and content. A very curious feature is that every Korean as soon as he reaches rising land seems impelled to sing. The writer was never on a hill with a native that the latter did not break forth into song. Almost every one met on the heights, boy or man, will be either singing or humming.

One is constantly reminded by the Koreans of two traits of the Swiss, their love of mountains and of song.

Digitized by Google

Their singing is as strange to Western ears as their instrumental music. A few songs have a Western flavor, but the most of them are exceedingly monotonous, reminding one of the chants of the mediæval monks. A single note is held and dwelt on, and harmony is unknown. Korean music has but the air. Even a bass is unknown. The consequence is that a foreign band appears to them to emit a jargon of sounds. But on the few occasions when a band of musicians from a war-vessel has visited the capital, crowds of people have gathered to listen, and quaint and queer are the comments dropped at such times. To one accustomed to the reluctance found among Occidentals to sing upon invitation, the refreshing readiness of Koreans to sing when asked seems strange. Boys and men are usually very eager to sing. Affectation in this regard is unknown. Our house-boys or servants, or boys along the streets, could always be induced to sing us a song. Occasionally a dinner was given to the servants, and on such occasions permission was generally asked, and granted, to bring a drum and some other instruments, to the accompaniment of which some sang—perhaps solos; often all would join in.

Dancing, too, is a favorite pastime; the dancing, however, being rather posturing according to the Japanese or Nautch-girl fashion. These gestures, being wavy motions of the arms and hands and sinuous twistings of the body, accompanied by slow though comely slides

Digitized by Google





Dancing Girls. Page 179.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

of the lower extremities, are very graceful. Boys and girls are the dancers, the professional dancers being girls called *keesang*, of whom mention has been made elsewhere. These *keesang* figure quite largely in the literature and stories of the people.

The transition from grave to gay is not always an abrupt one. Smiles and tears are kin. The solemnities of Koreans are confined to the thought of the dead. Worship and death alone call out their solemn feelings. And yet the people do not seem to dread death. Their belief leads them to look for a life beyond. While Heaven is angry when it removes a friend or relation who has not reached old age, it is the survivors who are punished, not the one whom death has taken away. Mourning is natural and obligatory. Therefore professional mourners are hired to express the grief female relatives may not exhibit in public. In death, as in life, there is a great distinction between the rich and the poor. Hills are the burial-places. For members of the royal family a single grave occupies a hill, and no one else is interred there. Of wealthy men or high officials a number may occupy a hill together. But the people are buried together in numbers, their graves as closely contiguous as they can be placed. Passing out of the capital by almost any road, the traveler will come upon the burying-places, always on the tops and sides of hills and bold knolls, never in the valleys. Within the capital no graves and no temples are allowed. Almost as

Digitized by Google

soon as one passes through the gates the sights which meet the eyes are hills and knobs of ground, covered even down to the edge of the road which winds through them with little round hillocks generally not over two feet in height. The social position held in life by the deceased can always be inferred from the size of the mound over the grave and the amount of space devoted to it.

To us, who are accustomed to see the dead laid away in cemeteries which pleasant walks intersect, which trees and shrubs beautify, where the love which survives death makes attractive the last resting-place and preserves order there, the sight of the dead buried in promiscuous confusion, without (except in rare cases) stone or mark to tell whose body has been laid away, is strange and painful. The shape of the grave is new to us—a rounded mound heaped together as if to blot out recollection of the shape the earth has taken to itself. No walks or drives or paths separate the dead of one family from those of another, but wherever the blind magician or fortune-teller, called in to locate the grave, says the lucky place is, there is the grave. It must not be supposed, however, that prince and pauper lie side by side. Here, where rank is so fixed a barrier that the noble may not work even to ward off starvation, the distinction which rank brings does not terminate with death. The poor naturally bury together, while those who commanded more money occupy hills in company and

Digitized by Google

take more space for their graves. The richer people have larger mounds, broader and higher, and around each grave a space is levelled, while the hill behind the grave is terraced in crescent form to the grave next above, and the grass is kept closely cut and raked. No shrubs nor flowers are set to adorn the place, the only adornment being nature's carpet of green grass or shining snow. Among the highest nobility even this kind of association is disdained, and whole hills are pre-empted for the burial-places of individuals. Around the capital there are several hills occupied by but a single grave, and these hills may not be used for the burial of others. In these cases the grave is high up on the hill, and partially surrounded at the back by a wall; at the side and in front are placed stone images, rudely carved, of sheep, pony, attendants (priests), and sometimes a calf. A crescent-shaped background of dark pines sets off the hill. At a short distance, directly in front of the hill, are two high posts joined by a cross-beam with ornamental work on it, similar to those in front of temples in Japan. Directly at the foot of the hill is a building in which are usually kept the paraphernalia used in ancestor-worship, and in front of this, like a porch, is a flagged space roofed with tiles and shaded by screens. At the side of this is a small house roofed with tiles, but enclosed at the sides and front with railings, which contains the tablet on which are inscribed the name, rank and deeds of the departed. These tab-

Digitized by Google

lets are often of dark granite, highly polished, with the inscriptions beautifully cut. These spots are often made by foreigners the rendezvous for picnic parties, for they are generally so located as to be both picturesque in themselves and to give very pretty outlooks on the surrounding country. The royal family has in its burials chosen the prettiest spots in all the country round in which to lay away its dead.

A Korean funeral is a sad affair. When a death occurs in any family, the neighbors have no excuse for being ignorant of the fact. The women and girls and boys mourn in shrill and penetrating tones that reverberate through the night air with frightful distinctness. Oftentimes hired mourners are called in, and they make night hideous with their cries. One of the duties of the survivors, who mourn as they do it, is to burn the clothing of the dead. This is done at night, usually in the street in front of the door. Several times, when the author has started out very early for the purpose of spending a morning with his gun, he has surprised women at this mournful task, and at length became quite accustomed to noting a sudden withdrawal of the women engaged in the task and an abrupt termination of the mourning cries. Female relations do not accompany the body to the grave. If the dead person was very poor, he is carried by two bearers to his final resting-place on a rude bier covered by a half cylinder of paper pasted to reed hoops. The body

Digitized by Google

is prepared for burial by being wrapped in straw. No coffin is used. The body often rests on the ground outside an inn while the bearers take their breakfast or quaff *sool* (native beer) inside. The whole cost of such a burial is not much over two or three dollars. The graves are often very shallow, especially in the winter. One of the ghastliest sights I witnessed in Korea was a dog taking his dinner from the foot of a corpse buried almost on top of the earth. The spring thaw had caused the mound to crumble away, and so had exposed the body. A raven stood only a few feet away, evidently waiting till the dog had sated himself and had left the feast.

It is probably on account of the occupation of the hills as burial-grounds, and the horror felt at the thought of disturbing graves, that the Koreans are averse to opening up the mineral wealth lying in the mountains. As worship is paid to the spirits of the dead at the graves, disturbing the tombs is to the people the equivalent of sacrilege. There is a probability that this feeling will give way to a desire to develop the resources of the country.

It is quite certain that the antipathy felt by natives toward foreigners has been fostered by thoughts of what really occurred in the shameful expedition which has been described by Oppert in his *A Forbidden Land.* At the capital the respect shown by foreigners for the dead and the bereaved, and the kindness ex-

Digitized by Google

tended to the needy survivors in cases where their want has come to be known, have had their effect in proving that such expeditions as that referred to are only the deeds of the lawless and irresponsible among foreigners. A most kindly feeling is shown and is growing toward the representatives of a higher civilization than is possessed by the natives of the "kingdom of ten thousand isles."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER X.

RELIGIONS.

RELIGION in Korea has attained neither the intensity of growth which it has reached in China nor the luxuriance it shows in Japan.

In Japan art and nature have lent their charms to the deepening of religious fervor. The temples and shrines have absorbed the devotion of artists and mechanics and the resources of the wealthy. The result is that tourists in Japan visit the temples as the repositories and embodiments of beauty. The people frequent them in masses and as individuals. The visitor becomes accustomed to seeing the wayfarer stop to throw his cash into the treasury, ring the bell and clap his hands to catch the attention of the god absorbed in meditation, and say his prayer. The peddler lays aside his pack while he bows his head. The mechanic on his way to work stops and says a prayer. Many a priest may be heard chanting his orisons and varying his notes with strokes on a gong. The blind and diseased bring their troubles to the gods of wood and stone, and to those whom a piece of paper represents in the Shinto temples. Everywhere the religious life of the people forces itself into prom-

Digitized by Google

inence. Temples and worshipers abound on every hand, and in most houses there are family altars, as in the old days of Rome.

In China religion has petrified. As wood hardening in the process of silicification becomes heavier and colder and presses its way down upon the matter lying beneath, religion in China has hardened and grown weighty until its prescriptions have become the formulæ of life. His religious belief is the citadel of the Chinaman's conservatism. You may reconcile him to a difference in domestic environment; he may be brought to accept the results of Western researches in social and political economies, until the point is reached when advance comes into contact with religious life; but there the advance stops. Religion is not demonstrative, but it is intense and unyielding.

In Korea an altogether different aspect confronts us. The temples are few, and lack the element of picturesqueness. They reflect the poverty of the country. Stately structures on commanding sites, approached through rows of votive lanterns, rich in lacquer and wealthy in decorations and gifts, are conspicuous only by their absence. Thus the conditions we find in Japan are lacking. In Korea extended association with the people for a decade has convinced us that among the masses the conservatism and intense opposition to a change of religion found among the Chinese has not to be encountered. A fair start has been made by

Digitized by Google

Protestant missionaries in the six years they have been at work in the peninsula. While China and Japan have each three cults or forms of religion, in Korea only two are found—Buddhism and Confucianism. Of course the introduction of both of these was from China.

From what we have learned of the literature and language of the peninsula, we should infer that the dominant religion there is Confucianism. In fact, such is the case. From the lowest peasant up to the king, Confucianism is practiced by all. But, as is natural, since the upper classes are the most influenced by the Chinese classics, it is there that the most strenuous opposition to the introduction of Christianity is found, and where there is the most resistance to all innovation. The worship of ancestors before tablets and at their graves is the one practice which all follow. This worship seems a perfunctory performance. When officials and peasants have been asked why, on a certain day in the year, they go to the ancestral tablets or to the graves of their ancestors and present offerings—whether it is that they fear that those ancestors have power to bring them evil, or that they wish to implore their active favor and intervention in the matters of this life, the uniform answer has been, "No, we neither apprehend evil nor anticipate good; it is *law*, it is *custom*, to do this." We have been able to elicit no other answer. Religion, then, is not among Koreans a motive force which controls the

Digitized by Google

will, operates on the emotions and moulds the life. On the contrary, it seems to be in its senescence. It is a dutiful following out of time-honored customs. Of course the ethics of Confucianism rule the country. Its crowning jewel, filial regard, appears as prominently in the peninsula as in the Celestial empire. A young man, of whatever station, regards with respect the speech of an old man, no matter how lowly his social status. Confucianism has moulded state relations, and in times of famine and pestilence the king is the one who appeals to the Lord of heaven to avert the plague.

There are traces throughout the country of a former more extensive worship of Buddha. At present, while not tabooed, Buddhism is little followed. True, the guardians of some of the fortresses are Buddhist monks. They are supported by His Majesty from the public granaries in return for this service. The monks who have the care of the little shrines placed here and there along the way do not have this advantage, but they beg from the people, and certainly do not seem to suffer. There is no mutilation, no maiming of the body—nothing that repels one from the priests and monks except the shaving of the head. Yet the status of Buddhism in the eyes of the people is fixed by the fact that no monk may enter the capitals. One found within the walls is put to death. Consequently there are no temples inside the walls of the capital. There are ancestral tablets before which Confucian rites are

Digitized by Google



Buddhist Shrine Outside the Capital. **Page 188.**

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

performed, but there is no temple except one in the north-west corner, a "Temple of Heaven," really no temple at all, but an open space paved and surrounded by a low wall and with a grove as a background.

One who visits, say, the fort of Puk Hon, a fortress ten miles to the north of the capital, will find the men inside it all monks. He will see these men with shaved heads lounging around, doing nothing that looks at all like either military or religious duty except that a number may be found at a dingy temple in which are disreputable images before which attendants mumble or chant prayers unintelligible even to themselves. Diligent inquiry would show that these monks are not such upon deep conviction and for religious principle, but that the rice given from the public stores suffices to make this mode of living attractive to them. Among the people I never met a single hearty Buddhist. I found persons who spoke of the monks with a laugh or a sneer, showing in their way of speaking that they pitied them. The monks themselves were harmless enough. They seemed too lazy to do anything. They were in a state of harmless inactivity. Occasionally one is met with miniature drum or cymbal, begging, singing a song in native fashion and receiving alms in goods or cash for his monastery. These gifts are made to secure the prayers of the community, on the principle that no harm could, and good might, result from the prayers thus bespoken. But little efficacy was expected from any such inter-

Digitized by Google

position, and the alms were given rather from the generosity which is a component of Korean character.

The real worship of the Koreans is before the ancestral tablets and at the graves. This is simple in character. It consists merely in setting out, on small tables, offerings, principally rice with various condiments, before which prostrations are made and prayers offered. The spirit is supposed to be present and to partake of the gifts thus presented. Among the upper classes more is attached to this ceremony than among the peasants, to whom, indeed, it is often a meaningless ceremony. Read, as are the literati, in Confucian lore, these upper classes find there the guarantee and strength of their eminence, and the urgent reason for supporting Confucianism and for opposing all other forms of worship. This ceremony becomes to them the warrant of their respectability and orthodoxy and the guarantee of the permanence of their position.

But subsidiary to these two religions, which are the prominent religious features, is belief in a multiplicity of spirits and demons of different powers and various characters. The gates of the cities, palaces and temples, and often of private houses, are surmounted by tiles cast as ridge-pieces and corner-pieces, in grotesque shapes of birds and monkeys and contorted figures of men. These are to frighten off the various spirits of evil and the demons which otherwise might enter the city to disturb its peace and destroy its prosperity. During the cholera

Digitized by Google

season of 1886, as I passed from street to street, I often found stretched across the entrances of the narrower ways bits of string from which depended slips of paper or pieces of rag inscribed with invocations to cholera devils not to enter that street and carry off the inhabitants. Fires were burned outside the walls to scare away or propitiate the same malicious beings. As the traveler goes along any road or path he will every little while pass a tree or bush decorated with bits of colored rag or paper; occasionally a prayer is attached, and beneath the tree will be found an irregular pile of small stones. He will find that these bushes or trees are the reputed homes of sprites or genii, and that the stones are cast there by chance wayfarers, who deposit with the stones whatever bad luck the journey might have brought them.

Here and there the tourist may be shown a little hut inside of which he will find some figures painted on paper, representing the patron deity, and hung on the walls prayers in Korean and Chinese, in which the petitioner begs "for one year of 360 days to be delivered from all sorts of sickness and disease, and from all unprofitable ventures." Occasionally a more stately building will be seen, which is perhaps erected to the memory of some celebrated warrior, who after his death was deified, and to whose honor the temple was built. Passing in from the street through the gate, at each side of which is stationed, in a little chamber, a wooden

Digitized by Google

horse of wonderful variety of color, held by a wooden image of a *mah-poo* (groom), of surpassing ugliness, the visitor will find himself in a courtyard, on one side of which is the main building, while the other sides may be given up to rooms open in front, though cut off by railings, and on the inner wall of which are depicted the principal scenes, drawn in a stereotyped and grotesque manner, of the mundane existence of the demigod. The main building will generally be found dark, but when opened, the figure of the deified warrior, in red and gilt, with glaring eyes and impossible mustache, may be seen, seated in defiant attitude on his throne. In close proximity to each other may be seen the strangest objects—gifts of worshipers. Here an ancient sword of native make keeps guard while a Waterbury clock ticks the seconds as if in derision. In one shrine I saw before the god a solitary rubber boot, much the worse for wear, which the donor had perhaps picked up from the ash-heap of some foreign resident of the capital, or which had been discarded by a disgruntled hunter. But as an object of beauty no temple is worthy of a visit after seeing those of Japan. The temples are interesting only as showing the torpor of religious life and the decadence of art and taste.

Little family shrines are sometimes erected in the country districts; and at points along the great highways are found what might be called private shrines, at which the traveler may stop and perform his devotion and

Digitized by Google

then proceed, giving the maker and keeper of the shrine a gratuity of one or two cash (one-quarter of a cent). The only representative of deity in such places is a poorly-painted figure on a sheet of white paper.

But the Korean is intensely superstitious. Events which to the Western mind are perfectly explicable and devoid of mystery are to the native gruesome and awful. Not long after my arrival in Korea I was startled by one of the men attached to the house running in to tell me, with an air of perturbation, that "a heavenly dog was eating up the moon, and would I please come out and see." It occurred to me that there was an eclipse of the moon due at that time, so I went out to view the phenomenon. When I got out of the house I heard a great din in the street, the beating of drums and iron instruments throughout the city, together with firing of guns. Soon came from the palace the sound of platoon firing, and then the quick rattle of the American gatling-guns turned on the voracious monster. Asking what all this meant, I was told that it was noise made with the object of scaring off the heavenly dog; that it had been uniformly successful all through Korean history; that though the beast had often nearly eaten the moon up, he had always been scared off before completing it; and, in short, that this noise was very good medicine, and that they proposed to keep it up.

In like manner, various bodily ailments are ascribed to the evil influences of sprites and devils. This comes

Digitized by Google

out in the enchantments to ward off the cholera. The same thing is evident, too, in the employment of conjurers to locate graves, in order that the remains may rest securely, and in taking circuitous routes to the grave, to prevent the return of the spirit or the attack of demons on the survivors.

The belief in demoniacal possession is very common. This belief is fostered by numbers whose interests are furthered by it. The exorcists and conjurers find in the commonest ailments excuses for using their powers in dispossessing the sick body of the sprites which have made it their home. It was no infrequent occurrence in rambles over the country or when out hunting to hear the noise of drums and to see a crowd around some house, waiting with eager curiosity to learn the result. Inquiry would elicit the fact that some devils had entered that house, and the sickness of one of the inmates had resulted. Meanwhile, day and night, it may be for a week, the ceaseless beat of drums is maintained until nature is either wearied out and death results, or she recovers herself and the patient is restored to health.

Spirits good and bad, sprites evil and benign, fairies kindly and malign, abound on hill and in dale, in nook and crevice of the rock, in hollow trees and cunningly-hidden caves. Any event of life may be governed by their interference. Luck plays a large part in the economy of native life. Innumerable are the specifics

Digitized by Google

for various ills, the former growing out of the care, and the latter out of the malevolence, of fairies or demons. Children are scared into good behavior, and adults are kept at home, by reports of spirits that are abroad at night. Omens are seen in the visits of the birds; the dreams which disturb the night are portents; and almost every chance event has for Koreans a bearing on the future. One of the departments of the government is that of Etiquette and Ceremonies, in which men studied in magic and in the lore of omens regulate official and royal conduct, guiding the course of events according to tradition and to prognostications from chance happenings. That an event is unlucky is sufficient to forbid the entrance upon any enterprise. The occurrence of the outbreak upon the occasion of the intended opening of the post-office will probably prevent for years the consummation of this project. Consequent upon this belief in omens are the various subterfuges for overreaching or circumventing Dame Fortune. Thus the season of kite-flying, which ends on the fifteenth day of the first moon, is closed by cutting the string of the kite as it flies in the air, when it falls and bears away with it much of the bad luck which might have attended the owner during the year. At the same season of the year an effigy of straw representing the maker is tied together, and in different parts of it are hidden cash, and also a scrap of paper on which is written, in Korean or Chinese,

Digitized by Google

some such prayer as, "For one year of twelve months, from all plagues and diseases and misfortunes deliver me." This effigy is then given to a boy who calls for it, and he, after cutting it up as much as is necessary to secure all the cash that can possibly be hidden in it, throws it where roads cross or meet. Sometimes a number of these effigies accumulate in some cross-roads, and the bystanders amuse themselves by making a fire of them or in kicking or tossing them about, or perhaps examine them closely to see whether any cash has been overlooked by the small boy. The more this man of straw is mutilated, the better the luck of the person it represents and the more complete his immunity from the evils that might assail him. Hence the money is hidden with all the ingenuity that can be exercised, to tempt to the complete demolition of the image. A variation of this is the cutting out of a paper figure, the writing on it of a prayer or incantation and giving a boy some cash to carry it away. So, too, at the same season, the tug of war is engaged in, since the winning side is supposed to revel in luxury throughout the year, while to the vanquished life will not be so pleasant. On this same fifteenth day of the first moon it is the custom for men of the same station in life to call to each other as they pass along the street, and if one answers the other, the person answering may be expected to carry away in his own person whatsoever diseases and misfortunes might have befallen the one who accosted him. There-

Digitized by Google

fore on that day every one is on his guard, and to the various and pressing calls no heed is given. In this we are reminded of some peculiar customs of our own pertaining to All-Fool's Day. On this day nearly all partake of one meal in which five kinds of grain are used, this being a mode of beseeching an abundance and variety of food during the coming year. At this meal a peculiar kind of wine called the "ear-brightening wine" is drunk, which is supposed to have the effect of sharpening the hearing and preventing aural diseases. At night there is a suspension of laws relating to curfew, and men may wander around the city without fear of arrest. The reason for this privilege is a current superstition that if a person traverse the city and pass over every bridge within the walls, he will have immunity from diseases of the lower limbs and extremities for a year. For this day nine is the lucky number. Accordingly, nine meals are eaten. If a man bring to the house a load of wood, he must manage to bring nine; or if a woman spin, she must spin nine bundles. The fifteenth of the Korean January is the time for prognostications regarding weather and crops. If on that day there is any wind, even enough to "move a rooster's tail," there will be much wind during the spring. There is naturally a great deal of blustering during the season. Men go down to the barley-fields and pull up grains of the fall-sown barley. If these grains have only one main root, the crop will be small; two roots

Digitized by Google

denote a fair crop; while three foretell a great abundance. The wise ones also tell which months will be the most rainy. A piece of bamboo is split, and into the slit twelve beans are inserted, and the whole is taken into the field and buried lightly for the dew or rain to moisten. The beans which swell most represent the months in which there will be the greatest rainfall.

While many of these superstitions have practically little to do with religion, the fact that belief in them is so universal indicates the lines along which missionaries find the most resistance. The tenacity with which they persist shows a power of reserve. Especially is the demonology of Korea an obstacle to success. Of this no adequate study has yet been made. The writer regrets few things so much as that his attention was not called to this field of investigation soon enough to permit of his getting a mastery of the subject. With a belief in demons so universal and persistent, undoubtedly the convert to Christianity finds his way a hard one. It is to be hoped that study along this special line, giving knowledge that will doubtless prove not only interesting but also helpful and practical, will be pursued by those who have such excellent opportunities as the missionaries now resident in the country.

Digitized by Google



Village Idols. Page 198.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

RESOURCES.

MEASURED by her developed industries, her exports and her imports, Korea is perhaps the poorest member of the family of nations. Measured by her possibilities, she stands very much higher in the list. As already stated, the country is not at all thickly settled if compared with her neighbors, Japan and China. Consequently the economy of ground and zealous and careful development of every inch of land, even to terracing the hills, is not seen in Korea, as it is in Japan, and still more in China. At a rough estimate, not a twentieth of the arable land is under cultivation. When we take note of the industries of the peninsula, we find even a greater torpidity. There are no manufactures which command an outside market, and while she has plenty of mineral wealth, what little is developed is done only in the crudest and most wasteful manner. Likewise—what might prove another most fruitful source of income—from the waters which nearly surround the peninsula, of not half that might be gained do they take advantage. Of forestry in the parts around the cities, naturally, there is none. Yet the

Digitized by Google

northern and western parts of the peninsula are well wooded. Near the capital the face of the country is denuded of trees, and firewood commands a high price. Of the timber which does exist, much, with the aid of foreign capital, might be made, since both in Japan and China there is a great demand for lumber, and high values could be realized.

Of mineral wealth Korea has an abundance, but, as stated, it is undeveloped. In the neighborhood of Ping Yang, the former capital and still an important city, there are magnificent veins, which come to the surface of the ground and show a fine quality of coal, seemingly anthracite, and yet burning with almost the readiness of the bituminous variety. This coal is quite hard, burns out well, makes almost no smoke, and even the dust can be and is utilized. This is done by mixing the dust with about an equal quantity of clay wet with water, rolling it into balls and then drying it. These balls make most excellent fires, and heat to redness the clay, throwing out a great amount of heat. This coal-field, not, we believe, the only one in Korea, is worked as yet only by the Koreans, and that in a most wasteful manner. Of course they know nothing of scientific mining, and they have no machinery. They simply grub out what is easiest to get at, tumble the rock and earth back into the excavation, and so cover up at least as valuable deposits as they excavate. Of mining shafts and tunnels they have no knowledge,

Digitized by Google

and consequently their coal, if mined by themselves, cannot well become a source of revenue. As the mines are almost on the bank of a large and navigable river, they are most favorably situated. Japanese coal brings from ten to twelve dollars (Japanese) a ton in the capital, so the native article could easily become a competitor with the Japanese, not only in Korea, but even in Japan and with the Chinese in China. In dealing with foreigners, Orientals show a not surprising wariness and caution, considering how often they have been overreached. In Japan the government has been for some years gradually displacing the foreigners in its employ, and replacing them with Japanese. But this is not done until the officials are tolerably certain that the natives have learned their lesson and know how to manage things. In Korea, however, especially in regard to developing its resources, the government is very shy of foreigners. Several good offers have been made by foreign firms, German and American, to open the mines and give the government a fair percentage of the proceeds. In this matter, however, the Koreans have played the part of the dog in the manger. Once, acting upon the advice of the foreign adviser and under the persuasion of the customs service, the residents of the capital were supplied for the winter with coal. The taste just whetted the appetite, for the Korean article was so much cleaner and better than the Japanese that everybody desired it. Since then no one has been able

Digitized by Google

to obtain it until the winter just passed. It is used in the palace, but hardly any one else can obtain it. It is not in demand among the people, who use twigs, dried grass and weeds and wood, for their fireplaces are not suited to the use of coal.

We understand that not very far from these coal-mines iron ore of an excellent quality is to be found. With abundant supplies of these two staples of industry almost touching each other, the statement that Korea may become wealthy is not unfounded.

Another source, at present the principal one, of revenue to Korea is gold-dust. In obtaining this, too, the crudest methods are in vogue. Only placer diggings are worked, and the report is that these are very rich. Only a few of these are worked, with pan and shovel, and yet several hundred thousand dollars' worth of dust is said to be sent every year to Japan. Of course, if placer diggings, worked without quicksilver, produce so much, what would be gained with modern methods, especially if the quartz veins which are the sources of the gold in the streams were prospected and worked, is sufficient to tempt high flights of fancy. It must be admitted, however, that the policy of the government does not seem to promise any immediate opening up of these sources of wealth. A considerable amount of silver is also gathered in different localities.

Besides the minerals above mentioned, copper is found in abundance, and of this more use is made than of any-

Digitized by Google

thing else. A considerable amount is mined and smelted every year, and used in the manufacture of brassware, while lead is quite abundant.

The above are all the metals whose existence is known. But it must be remembered that the country is unknown to geologists, that it has not been scientifically explored, and that its geological formation is so varied that even those unskilled in geology have been compelled, by the boldness of contrasts in the make-up of the rocks, to notice the difference in structure of adjacent parts of the peninsula. There is a point between the capital and Ping Yang where one standing on a height can mark all south of him as composed of granite, while north he sees only limestone. If the features are so varied where so much mineral wealth is known to exist, it is only fair to infer that when the peninsula is explored by competent observers much that will enrich the little kingdom will be found stored away in her hills and woods.

As is the rule in the East, agriculture is on a small scale. Upland and lowland are cultivated, the latter for rice, the former for varied products. The reason for the small area of cultivation is not because of density of population—for Korea is not densely populated—nor because of difficulty in obtaining land. As Dr. Allen says,* "All unoccupied land belongs to the king;

* *Korean Tales*, by H. N. Allen, M. D., New York and London, 1889, p. 8.

Digitized by Google

but any man may take up a homestead, and after tilling it and paying taxes on it for a period of three years it becomes his own, and must be purchased should the government need it." It is rather because of the poor tools which the Korean farmer has at his command, and of his small needs, which do not demand the unceasing attention which the care of a large farm would claim. All the average Korean cares for is sufficient to tide him over from one year's end to another. Beyond that, work is thrown away. What territory is tilled at all is well tilled. Their ploughs are superior to those of Japan, but they throw their furrows to the left. Perhaps the most striking of their instruments is the shovel, the mode of working which is rather unusual. This instrument has a straight handle about seven feet long, which is set into the blade, and this is made of wood, shod at the point and sides with iron. In the upper corners of the blade holes are bored and ropes are attached. Because of its form it requires an odd number of men to work it. One man takes the handle, holding it nearly perpendicularly and guiding it into the dirt, while one, two or three men hold and pull each rope, throwing or carrying the soil where it is needed. Work can be done very rapidly in this way, and we have seen laborers throw earth to a distance of two rods with one of these shovels. The principal use to which these instruments are put in farm-work is in clearing out the ditches or drains. The soil is full of springs, and,

Digitized by Google



Working with Shovel. Page 204.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

moreover, the amount of rain which falls in the rainy season necessitates the opening of channels for drainage. Garden plats are cultivated mainly by the use of a grubbing-hoe. On the farms rude harrows with wooden teeth, and even mats of brush, are used to level the soil and break it up. Fields are not plowed level, but in a succession of ridges, so that they look more like maize-fields than anything else. On garden patches a succession of crops is raised in a season. The climate is such that nearly all the products found in the United States can be grown in Korea.

In the way of fruits a great variety is found. Apples such as we have are not found there, though there is a variety of fruit which foreigners call apples, rather dry and mealy, but having a much more spicy flavor than our apple. Some of the missionaries have obtained grafts from Japan and China which are doing well. Of pears there are several varieties, though it requires a "cultivated taste" and abstinence from home fruits to enable one to like them. One or two varieties are decidedly puckery, reminding the eater forcibly of the choke-pear. The standard and most common kind are to the newcomer a delusion and a snare. They resemble in appearance the russet apple, being round, and they have the rough, tawny skin of that fruit. The first we saw were on the steamer plying between Nagasaki, Japan, and Chemulpo. They were on the dinner-table, and our eyes fairly glistened at the sight. We were

Digitized by Google

sadly disappointed on biting them to find them tough and woody, though exceedingly juicy. The most volatile of our party, who was late down to dinner, and consequently did not know of our disappointment, and who, being a New Englander, was very fond of russet apples, on his entry fairly rushed up to the table, and could not wait for dessert to get a taste of the russets. Winks passed around as we marked his eagerness, and a chorus of laughter greeted the disgust his countenance displayed. Disappointing as they are to the newcomer, the following season, or at any rate the second summer, will bring him to like them, for they contain so much juice that they are really refreshing. Plums are abundant and of good quality, though the season is short. They are not as large as our largest varieties, but are of excellent flavor, though apt to be somewhat affected by the curculio. Apricots and nectarines are very abundant, and equal in flavor the best of those grown in California. They are very cheap, but some caution is necessary in the eating of all fruits because of the tendency in the East to bowel troubles. Of peaches there is a great abundance, though they are different from any I have seen in our own land. They are longer, cling closely to the stone and the pulp is streaked a deep red, which, dropped on the clothing, leaves a very persistent stain. These are of good flavor, though the pulp is quite coarse. They are rather dearer than other fruit, though still not dear according to our standards. They can be bought

Digitized by Google

for between one and two cents each—not a high price for a peach larger than the average with us. The trees are cultivated not only for the fruit, but for the flowers. These come out before the leaves, and as many of them are a deep scarlet and double, an orchard of peach trees in bloom is one of the prettiest sights to be seen anywhere in the spring. The peach-blossom figures very largely in the artist's work both in Korea and in Japan. Wild grapes of the small variety are very abundant, but are insipid. There is grown in small quantities a very large green grape, which is produced in great clusters and is very similar in flavor to the Tokay grape. This variety is somewhat difficult to obtain. I once secured a bunch weighing two and a half pounds, for which I paid about fifty cents. It was the most shapely cluster I had ever seen.

The surprise of our lives, however, was met when we tasted the last fruit of the year. After my return I met a company of gentlemen, one afternoon, who questioned me as to my experience in the hermit kingdom. At last one of them asked, "Well, Gilmore, what fruit did you like best there?" To this I unhesitatingly replied, "The persimmon," at which they burst into a loud laugh, one remarking, "What a depraved taste!" After letting them have their laugh out, I told them what the fruit was. Of course their knowledge was limited to our own wild persimmon, which is recommended to those afflicted with too great extension of the principal

Digitized by Google

facial orifice. The Korean variety, however, even when green, is scarcely a reminiscence of our own. It resembles in appearance, as it equals in size, our large, smooth, pink tomato, so much so, in fact, that Koreans call tomatoes "American persimmons." The stones are no larger than the stones of our own variety, so that the pulp is much more abundant than in ours. This fruit begins to come into market from the first to the middle of September, and it is often purchasable till the first of February. It is constantly on the table, as one never seems to tire of it. The way this luscious fruit is eaten is to pull out the stem and then scoop out the pulp with a spoon. Well cooled in the refrigerator, a persimmon is as refreshing as a draught of water in the warm days of September and early October.

While Japan is called the land of the persimmon, it is certain that even in Japan the excellence of this fruit is never realized to the full. The Korean variety is unequaled. Fortunately, the raw state is not the only way in which these fruits are eaten. They are dried and pressed, and when in this shape they are still excellent and are a good substitute for figs. It may not be generally known that in October and November this fruit, though not in its perfection, can be obtained in New York, for it has been acclimated in California and, I believe, in Florida. I venture to prophesy that when it is more widely known it will make a strong bid for the favor of those who can afford the luxury.

Digitized by Google

Another fruit which is eaten in considerable quantities is the jujube-berry; but though the flavor is agreeable to some, it cannot be recommended, as it causes diarrhœa. Muskmelons and watermelons are both indigenous, though they never attain the perfection they reach in the United States. A Korean watermelon never reddens, and the muskmelon never mellows. It is a peculiar fact that seed from home had never, up to 1889, matured in Korea, probably owing to the plants' being fertilized by the blowing pollen from native varieties. Occasionally one finds muskmelons in the market which have a good flavor, but they are generally insipid and do not suit the taste of foreigners. Strawberries are grown by foreigners for their own tables, and produce well both in quantity and flavor.

Of vegetables there is a great abundance and great variety. Potatoes are raised in the north, though they are not a staple article of diet, as with us. They are generally small, though the report is that the yield is very good. Sweet potatoes are not grown except in the south, though they are so very abundant in Japan as to be called "the poor man's food." Egg-plants are abundant and cheap, though not so large as we are accustomed to see. A very important article of diet to Koreans is their lettuce or cabbage. It seems most like a cross between the two. Foreigners do not use it, as it is too coarse for use as a salad, and does not boil well as a green. Natives consume large quantities of it, using it

Digitized by Google

raw and chopped up with other vegetables. Another vegetable important to Koreans is the cucumber, growing much larger than we are accustomed to see. No one who has not visited Korea would know how much this production is to the people. Many a meal consists of nothing but a cucumber, eaten without salt, skin and all. It is the main reliance of many after the last year's rice is consumed and before the new crop has been gathered. To the consumption of this vegetable can doubtless be attributed part of the great mortality of the people during the cholera epidemics, since it is the principal food of many during the season when the scourge is at its height. Another extensively cultivated product is the onion, of which large patches are grown. Of beans and lentils many varieties, all small, are grown; they are used for food by man and beast. In the winter a common dish—and by some foreigners said to be a very toothsome one—is made of sprouted beans. Of peas like ours I have never seen any, though they grow luxuriantly from seed imported from England and the United States. Several varieties of squashes of excellent quality and good size are found, and are sold at very low rates. I once bought a number, most of which were nearly two feet long, paying four cents each for the lot. The castor-oil bean is raised for medicinal and ornamental purposes, nearly always as a border for other crops. Another crop very extensively raised is the red pepper. Of this vegetable

Digitized by Google



Grain Shop.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

enormous quantities are eaten, both green and dried. Koreans eat it in almost everything. It must be stated, however, that the Korean variety is not nearly so hot as that we find growing in the United States. In the autumn it is the custom to pick the crop and place it on the thatched roofs of the houses to dry. As the pedestrian gets on a hill overlooking a number of villages, the landscape seems to take on a very brilliant color, dotted as it is with patches of bright scarlet.

Of grains the principal is rice, and most of the valleys are taken advantage of for the culture of this cereal. In a sufficiently wet season there is a large quantity of rice raised, but never enough for the needs of the people. The deficiency is supplied from Japan. Barley is grown in moderate quantities, and is sometimes used as food by the poorer classes, but its principal use is as food for cattle. Wheat is very little known, though some is grown in the north and a little around the capital. A grain which is very useful to the people is millet, of which there are several varieties. This is one of the most graceful of cereals, and as it ripens, its heavy, well-filled head bowing gracefully on its strong stem and waving to the wind, it makes a very pretty picture. It is very toothsome, and we found it a pleasant variant to use in alternation with oatmeal, cracked wheat and the various breakfast cereals obtained from the United States.

The Koreans have a very ingenious way of keeping

Digitized by Google

the birds from their grain-fields. The country is overrun with the sparrow and magpie, and when the millet and rice are ripening they settle down in flocks upon the grain. To prevent the ruin of their crops the farmers put stakes around the fields of grain, and connect them with strings which are also carried across the fields, and on them are hung scarecrows of rags, while other scarecrows are set up, to the arms of which the strings are attached. Boys are employed to watch the field, and, as the birds attempt to settle, to shake the stakes and strings and to shout with lusty lungs, thus keeping the little thieves from their pilferings. Three or four boys, with the assistance of the strings and stakes and a man to keep them busy, can protect quite a large field from the depredations of the feathered robbers.

The foregoing list includes the principal resources of the inhabitants for food. Large granaries are placed in the principal cities and in the fortresses, in which the tribute rice is stored for use for national purposes. In times of scarcity these granaries are sometimes opened for the benefit of the people. The real purpose, however, is to receive the tribute, which is paid in kind, and to afford sustenance for the army and for His Majesty's retainers.

Other agricultural products are cotton, of not very good quality, growing rather poor, and mulberry trees for the silk industry, more especially in the south. Korean silk is very thin, is poorly spun and not

Digitized by Google

well woven. It resembles very thin pongee, and is not likely to become an article of commerce. Flax is also raised to some extent, and a fair quality of coarse linen is manufactured.

Of nuts, the English walnut and the large chestnut are particularly abundant, and the latter is so very plentiful that it is an acceptable article of diet.

Ploughing is done with oxen or cows. All the farm-work is done by hand. The oxen are of enormous size, and the ordinary cattle one meets along the roads are larger than the average prize cattle of our own land. They are kept by the natives solely as beasts of labor and burden, for Koreans use neither butter nor milk. Foreigners buy the cows for dairy purposes, but naturally the native cattle give very little milk, seldom over two quarts at a milking. The servants do not understand the dairyman's art, and are unable to develop the cow's milking qualities. The principal use of these cattle is as beasts of burden, and in a ride of a few miles in the morning a person will meet hundreds of the patient beasts moving slowly along, almost entirely hidden beneath loads of grass or brush or wood which are being taken into the city to be sold as fuel. But if the oxen are of large size, the horses or ponies make the balance even, for they are exceedingly small. It is a large animal which measures fourteen hands. The consequence is that a very tall foreigner has sometimes to hold his feet up when riding on a foreign saddle.

Digitized by Google

The Koreans escape this difficulty by having their saddles built up nearly a foot from the horse's back. One of the ludicrous sights which met me on my first day in the country was one of these little animals running away with a tall foreigner on its back, and the gentleman trying to stop the beast by dragging his feet on the ground. This course eventually brought both man and horse to the ground. As the former had just donned a clean white suit, he did not look very respectable after his encounter with Korean dust.

Chickens are plentiful and large, and are bought readily for about fifteen cents each. They therefore are quite an item in the foreigners' bill of fare. Eggs are sold by the yard. They are placed side by side and rolled in wisps of straw, each wisp being nearly a yard long and containing ten eggs. These also are cheap, looked at from our standpoint. There are no turkeys in the country, but occasionally an enterprising foreigner secures one from China in order to grace a Christmas or Thanksgiving dinner-table.

The fisheries, which are excellent, produce no revenue for the kingdom, as the fishermen sell only to their own people. Immense quantities are dried, and various and queer are the ways for preserving them.

A few pearls are found, but very few of good shape and color, most of them, though large, being flat and dark. They are highly esteemed among the people, and bring good prices from officials.

Digitized by Google

A great deal of ginseng is found by the people, but this must be turned over at a certain valuation to the officials, to be sold for the king's benefit, as the exportation of ginseng to China is a monopoly of the crown. China consumes large quantities of it, and it is there considered the very best of medicines. The revenue thus accruing is said to be very large, and the drug brings enormous prices in Korea. It was reported that it is a capital offence to smuggle ginseng from the country.

As Dr. Griffis states in his *Corea, the Hermit Nation*, the last great invasion of the peninsula by the Japanese marks the death of Korean industry and art and the renaissance of Japanese art. The Japanese when they retired carried away with them every artisan they could learn of, and so brought about a revival of industry and of production of art objects in their own country and the extinction of both in Korea. There cannot be claimed now for Korea any important manufacture. The two lines in which the most is done is in the way of cabinet-work and the production of sets and pieces of brassware.

It may be said here that there is no necessity for a family, say of missionaries, who intend to live in Korea to take bureaus with them. They will find there cabinets, large, roomy, convenient and ornamental, at a less price than bureaus command here. One made of hard wood which we had while in the country stood six feet

Digitized by Google

high, and was four feet wide by one and a half feet deep. The front was of curled maple veneering, with the patterns of the wood beautifully matched, and trimmed with heavy brass designs of butterflies, etc., the doors being fitted with brass hinges. It had two large closet-like apartments, and fourteen small drawers suitable for table cutlery and other small table furniture. The cost of that article was five dollars in gold. Smaller ones, suitable for washing-stands, were at that time obtainable for three dollars, and, as they were easily moved, were very convenient articles of furniture. One street of the capital is called by foreigners "Cabinet Street," because the shops on both sides are nearly all devoted to the sale of these articles. Considering the price of these cabinets and the value they would have in the United States, I have often wondered that the supply was not exhausted for American use.

The Koreans turn out an excellent line of brassware, some of the dinner-sets being especially fine. One of these I have at my home, consisting of thirty-two pieces, nicely turned, and which cost me about three dollars in gold. These, too, are made only for domestic use; none are exported. In the making of both brass-work and cabinets no originality is shown, and each piece is modeled after a pattern with great exactness. Everything seems to be stereotyped and a reproduction of something after which it is made.

In the south some mother-of-pearl work is done

Digitized by Google

which has a very pretty effect, and indeed a few pieces show great artistic taste. One cabinet of about the same dimensions as the one spoken of above, inlaid on two sides and on the front with exceedingly fine work, was offered at thirty-five dollars, Mexican, and was sold for twenty-four. Undoubtedly the piece in New York would have commanded two hundred dollars.

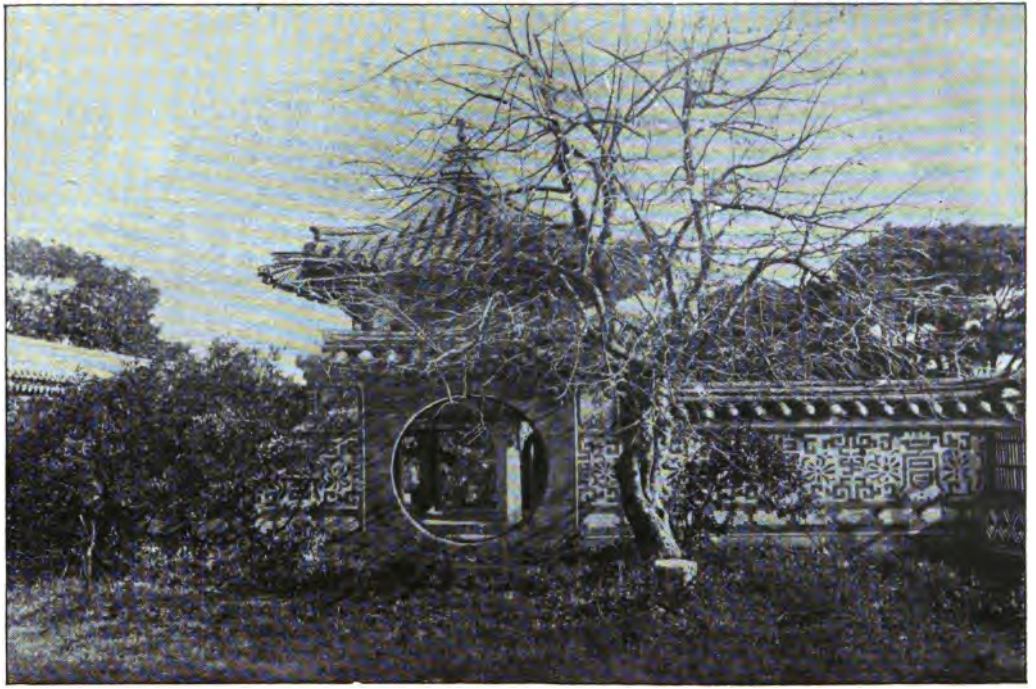
Fans of various sizes, shapes and materials are made in the country, and as tribute to His Majesty is paid in kind, he has a vast number to give as presents to his servants and to the nobles who have duties at the palace. These fans are far superior in strength to those of Japanese make, though the paper is pasted only on one side. The bamboo which forms the framework is well polished, often decorated with great patience and pretty effect. Some of the open fans, made with paper, are marvels of cleverness in coloring, and some which have been brought or sent to friends in the United States have been thought superior to anything seen here, as they certainly excelled in oddity. Another industry peculiar to Korea is the making of Kang-Wha mats. These are made at Kang-Wha (where our marines just escaped the deadly fire of the Korean fort), of rushes which are cultivated only there. These mats are made about three to four feet wide and from eight to sixteen feet long. The patterns, which look as though they were painted on, are really made of short pieces of stained rush *sewed*

Digitized by Google

on, but so closely and carefully done that only the minutest examination reveals the secret of their make-up. These are not made even for domestic commerce, but are meant for His Majesty's use alone. But they find their way into the market through being presented at the palace to this or that mandarin, whence they pass for ready money into the merchant's hands. Very nice window-shades are made of bamboo split and worked into fine round slips about as large as cotton cord, and then fastened together with silk and ornamented with set patterns stained into the bamboo.

In the way of fine pottery Korea is no longer a producer. All that work is now done in Japan or China. It must be galling to the Korean who knows the history of his country to see, when walking through the streets, the booths and shops filled with pottery imported from Japan, and to remember that Japan forcibly imported from Korea the men who taught the Japanese how to make porcelain, and thus made this a lost art to the Koreans. In fairness to the Japanese, however, it must be conceded that the art has not been stationary with them. Unquestionably, Koreans never made such graceful and delicate ware as the patient Japs turn out. I have seen much old Korean pottery, said to be of the finest grade that the peninsula ever turned out, and none at all approached in beauty of form, variety and delicacy of ornamentation or in perfection of finish the exquisite porcelain of modern Japan.

Digitized by Google



Mural Decorations. Page 219.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Useful articles of pottery of the coarser grades are made in abundance, and in the making of tiles, of pipes for conduits and of earthenware jars of various sizes Koreans are still adepts.

The art productions of Korea are very few. They are confined to embroidery, the production of mother-of-pearl cabinets, dining-tables, pillow-ends, etc., engraving on wood for decoration of letter-paper, color-painting for the decoration of fans and screens and work in the ornamentation of walls of houses and court-yards.

The forcible deportation of artists in the last Japanese invasion has already been referred to as causing the extinction of art in Korea. In the pearl-work something is still done, the cabinets and little dining-tables and boxes being covered with a black, glossy and very tenacious paste, into which the pieces of mother-of-pearl are set, and which hardens into a material which endures well the attacks of time. Some of this pearl-work is exceedingly pretty, and excels both in artistic quality and durability much of that done in Japan. Embroidery is continually being done in the palace, where a trained corps of women are kept for this purpose. They do work on silk for screen-panels, and though exceedingly conventional in their treatment of rocks, clouds, water and landscape generally, their figures of birds, butterflies, bats and the palm and bamboo are very correct and lifelike. I have seen very few Korean

Digitized by Google

paintings, and most of those only in one or other of the palaces. To a Western eye they were exceedingly ridiculous, showing not even the most elementary knowledge of perspective. In the temples erected to the honor of deified heroes there are usually a number of paintings purporting to portray the important events and achievements in the lives of the heroes. These bear a very marked resemblance to similar paintings in Japan, the style of execution being the same.

The tourist when passing along the street often sees little disks of decorated work, sometimes cloth embroidered, sometimes of wood inlaid with mother-of pearl, and again of carved stone-work, these disks varying in diameter from four inches to ten, and always going in pairs. His curiosity will be aroused, and only whetted when he learns that they are pillow-ends, since there is nothing about them to suggest a pillow, according to his notions of what a pillow should be. He will soon learn that a Korean pillow is a small roll filled with cotton, and that these disks are the ends, which are decorated according to the fancy and means of the owner. Some of these bear designs, the favorite being tigers, bats and Chinese characters. I have quite a collection of these, which show the native liking for decoration of this sort. A curio which is much affected by tourists is a little iron puzzle box, the iron being inlaid with silver in a curious way in various patterns. Possibly this work is done in Japan, but I have never seen it outside

Digitized by Google

of the Korean peninsula. In their correspondence Koreans, as well as Japanese, like to use decorated paper, the decorations being stamped on with wooden plates carved in relief. Some exceedingly pretty work is done in this line, one block in my possession giving a very graceful impression.

In the foreign commercial relations there is as yet little inducement for foreigners to enter the country. Chinamen are there in great numbers, as also Japanese, who have opened stores where nearly everything of foreign production can be obtained. Since Chinese and Japanese can live very much cheaper than Western merchants, as a rule they can sell for much less, and consequently there is nothing to induce traders to settle there. Besides this, the poverty of the people is so great that they are unable to pay the high prices Western-made articles command. Two firms, one German and one American, do business in the capital, but the bulk of their trade is with the palace and the government directly in the furnishing of arms, gatling-guns and furniture, and, of course, the inevitable champagne and liquor. These commodities are fortunately too high priced for the masses, so there is less danger than might be expected of the corruption of the Korean people by the introduction of fiery drinks. The most important imports from England are unbleached muslin, out of which clothing is made, rice and silk from Japan and silk from China. A curious penchant of

Digitized by Google

Koreans is for cuckoo clocks. The cuckoo is a native of the peninsula, and people seem never tired of entering a store and listening to the cry of the birds which come out of the clocks and tell the hour. Dozens of these are kept in the Chinese stores, and they sell readily at a good profit. Woollen goods are not used in the peninsula, as will be seen in the chapter on dress. There is a greater probability of opening up a trade in agricultural implements than of anything else as yet. Ploughs, harrows, hoes, shovels, rakes, spades, axes, hatchets, hammers and various carpenters' tools, and such implements, will probably make their way, as they are superior to those of native make. As sawing is done by hand, probably small circular saws with horse-power attachments would be taken up readily. Unfortunately for Americans, the Eastern market is well occupied by the English. China, Japan and Korea take most of their cotton and articles of foreign manufacture from England. Yet, at least in Japan and Korea, if national sentiment had any weight, the bulk of trade would be with our own country. The writer does not intend to enter on a tariff discussion any further than to state the fact that in these Eastern countries, which are nearer to the United States than to England, and the population of which numbers about five hundred millions, the people in which are more favorably disposed to the United States than to any other nation, practically the whole trade is with England. There

Digitized by Google

is at any rate room for thought whether a policy which shuts out our manufacturers from competition with those of a nation which is hated and feared, and which compels us to look to domestic consumption alone, is not in the long run, whatever it may be now, a mistaken one. Clearly, a time is coming when Americans will desire foreign trade as an outlet for superabundant manufactures. Bearing in mind the conservative tendencies of Eastern nations and the largeness of the stake, one would suppose that the catering to the wants of over one-third of the population of the world would be looked to, since the earliest on the ground is likely to stay the longest. With the ground early occupied and a reputation for fair dealing established, the United States could doubtless in the near future have a profitable trade with the twelve to fifteen millions of Koreans, and not less with the hundreds of millions of Chinese. Kerosene from America is used very largely. Other things might be profitably introduced.

At the same time, it must be remembered that the average commercial transaction is very small. The coin of Korea is the "cash," which, however, is not uniform over the country. The piece in use at the capital, which is called a five-cash piece, has about the value of one-fourth of a cent. This is the basis of calculation. Twenty-five dollars' worth of this is a load for a coolie. The comparative smallness of even the largest Korean transaction can be seen from this. In

Digitized by Google

dealings with foreign countries the Mexican dollar used to be the basis, but since it was so greatly debased and sweated and tampered with by the Chinese, it has been largely replaced by the Japanese *yen*, a beautiful coin engraved with such fine designs and so excellently milled that even the Chinese experts at stealing silver from coins and plugging them up are unable to operate upon it. Kerosene is retailed in quantities of about a gill, and if a native has made a sale of a case to a foreigner (a thing he can do only in an emergency, since the Koreans often dilute their kerosene with water), he has set himself up in business on quite a large scale. The above, then, is a gauge for the extent of the retail mercantile operations. Yet with patience, with the introduction of cheaper grades of woollen goods and with the development of resources a respectable trade will doubtless develop with the once hermit nation.

The balance of trade, which is against Korea, is paid mainly by the exportation of gold-dust. Considerable aid is derived from the exportation of ginseng to China. Occasionally large consignments of beans to Japan reduce the balance against Korea. Yet the country cannot be said to be in a safe way to a healthy financial condition until it learns to develop what must prove from the beginning to be its main sources of reliance—a healthier and more energetic system of agriculture, and the opening of mining interests, under proper restrictions, by foreign capital (until Koreans have learned how such

Digitized by Google

operations should be carried on), in all this acting with more candor and less distrust toward the people to whom it must commit the developing of its resources. With the customs left under its present able and honest management, though it were better if freed from Chinese interference and dictation, and with China compelled to keep hands entirely off, a very few years would see Korea rivaling Japan in the advance toward wealth and prosperity.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XII.

PROGRESS TOWARD CIVILIZATION.

KOREA has now been a member of the family of nations for eight years, and naturally the thoughtful are beginning to ask what has been accomplished. Japan on the one side has made wonderful strides. She has thrown off the incubus of feudalism. She has entered the markets of the world, and her products have become an appreciable factor in the calculations of the statisticians of commerce. Her people are doing all they can to become Westernized. National support of native temples has been withdrawn. Her sons have been educated in European and American universities. Her own school system is modeled after Western patterns. European and American instructors sit in her professorial chairs. Her military and naval officers have learned their lessons at Western military and naval schools. A constitution similar to that of some of the European governments has been adopted. The government from being an absolute monarchy has now become a constitutional government, with its provisions copied after and suggested by European and

Digitized by Google

American instruments. In fact, Japan is losing a great deal of its Orientalism. Such is the tendency of one of Korea's great neighbors. Now, what of the other? As Japan represents the radical or progressive, China represents the ultra-conservative. Hardly a step toward Occidentalism does she take without being forced. Almost every movement out of her past has been at the point of a bayonet held by a superior power. A Chinaman who received his education in Columbia College once said to the author: "Every foot of progress China has made she has been thrashed into making. Each war she has waged and each defeat she has experienced has taught her a lesson. A small English force a few years ago marched without difficulty from Tientsin to the capital, but they could not do it to-day. Every time China has had to take a plum of Western civilization she has shaken her head and shut her teeth and said, 'I won't have it.' And the only way she has been made to take it was by prying open her teeth with the bayonet and pushing it down her throat. And even then she had to be watched to see that she did not take an emetic." That is the testimony of a Chinaman. A close observer once said of her religion: "It is almost as difficult to convert an adult Chinaman who has been faithfully nurtured in his belief as to transplant a full-grown pine from the forest to a garden and make it grow." Those, therefore, who know the tendencies of these nations have naturally been watching carefully to

Digitized by Google

see which of them Korea will follow—Japan and Occidentalism, or China and the Oriental conservatism.

Let us see what has been done. Only a mention of the opening of three ports by treaty need be made: it is the results of that opening in which we are interested. It will be remembered that in 1883 His Majesty sent an embassy headed by Prince Min Yong Ik to America, and that this embassy was received in the United States with open arms. The members were shown much of the country. They were told not a little of the operations of the government. Our educational system came under their view. And when their visit was terminated, and they were escorted back in a United States man-of-war, they expressed themselves as impressed with the greatness and excellence of Western government. Among other things recommended was the starting of a school under royal auspices, and the American Government was asked to nominate three competent young men to undertake the management and teaching of this institution. Negotiations were conducted ably, thoughtfully and disinterestedly by Lieutenant Foulke, U. S. N., then chargé d'affaires *ad interim* for the United States. The author was one of the three nominated, and we expected to proceed some time during 1884 or early in 1885. In the late winter of 1884–85 the excessive and bloodthirsty zeal of some of the radicals precipitated a revolution which seemed likely to nullify the preparations made; but, as events

Digitized by Google

showed, it only delayed our departure till 1886. We were summoned in the spring of that year, and landed on Korean soil July 4th. We found the Koreans ready to welcome us and do us all honor. Houses had been bought and partly prepared for our occupation, school-buildings and quarters for the scholars were well under way and everything looked promising. But the proverbial slowness of the Orient harassed us, and it was the last week in September before we got to work. The pupils belonged to the nobility, and were appointed by the king. Thirty-five were named as our first class, of whom thirty began attendance on the exercises. We found that not one of them knew a word of English, so that we had to begin with the alphabet. Three interpreters were attached to the school, one for each of the teachers. These we found helpful at the start, though we could soon have dispensed with their services. A word should be spoken here about the purpose of the school. There are two parties in Korea, which may be called the Conservatives and the Progressists. The king is at heart a Progressist. He is not a radical, but a ruler who believes his people can be benefited by being led up to a higher level, but with the wise determination not to have them led faster than they can follow. He is surrounded by men steeped in Chinese dogmatism and conservatism. China herself, as will be shown in the chapter on foreign relations, is continually interfering to retard progress. Charges

Digitized by Google

are trumped up against those of the king's counselors who are supposed to support him in this policy, and these men are in one way or another gotten out of the way. There is thus a constant need for men who are prepared to support His Majesty in his measures of progress. Our school was expected to do this. It was supposed that the scholars by association with men representing Western culture and attainments, having learned something of enlightenment and its blessings, would become liberals and firm supporters of the king. Thus far that end has been attained. And it is the belief of the teachers that in no way can a civilization which will raise Korea out of its present low estate get so firm a foundation as by gaining supporters among the governing class.

To return to the work of the school: The scholars learned very rapidly. Their memories had been developed by the study of Chinese. Our teaching was by daily praxis. As soon as the scholars had learned a small vocabulary, natural science and mathematics were brought before them, and they learned English through these channels. Their eyes were opened by one of the first lessons in geography, when they heard for the first time of the relative unimportance of their little kingdom. Their country goes by the name of "Tai Cho Son," GREAT Cho Son. They learned that the title "great" was a misnomer. But as economics was brought to their attention the truth was soon grasped

Digitized by Google

that a country which developed its resources and paid its debts, no matter what its rank in greatness among the nations, gained the respect of the world.

In intellectual ability the Koreans rank well. We found, however, that we had to be on our guard against merely memoriter work. The tendency was to commit sentences and to store them up for possible future use. Notwithstanding this, we found good logicians, bright mathematicians and, now and then, promising philologists among them. Unfortunately, our work was hampered by the distrust of foreigners which is universal in the East. The school board of mandarins winked at the lax attendance of the scholars. The idea of steady application is repugnant to a Korean. As there is no royal road to knowledge, of course our scholars had to study. We naturally were on our mettle. At the same time, we endeavored to have them digest thoroughly what we gave them. Soon application was made to shorten the school hours from six to four hours a day during the winter. We protested against this, but to no avail. The work was too hard, they thought, and the scholars who were officials were influential enough to secure this favor from His Majesty. Soon we found these same scholars missing days at school on the pretense of "business at the palace," and this in the face of the fact that for three months not a day's absence had marred the record of any scholar. The president and vice-president of the school were nice, easy-going

Digitized by Google

fellows who were easily imposed upon, and they readily listened to excuses in reply to our complaints. Finally but few of the "rank men" or scholars with official position attended. They had a smattering of English, could talk a little, and were too indolent to work since they could get along without it. Meanwhile the younger scholars had been doing fine work. The best scholars were the youngest boys and those who could hope for advancement through their English studies. The efforts of the school board, at the examination held in the presence of the king, to pass as good scholars men who had done no work met the defeat it deserved. Experience suggested ways of getting men to work. It was suggested that the appointers should all be without official rank, that rank should be bestowed for scholarship and that absence beyond a specified time should forfeit the appointment or cadetship. Improvement was manifest from that time. The scholars have an incentive for work. With perhaps a single exception, all scholars who have attended the school have by their association with the teachers and by what they have learned been made opponents of the policy which would shut up Korea within herself, if that were possible. One purpose of the school has been gained, and if the machinations of the Chinese do not prevail, and if the school founded in the capital be allowed to develop into something like the school system which is bearing such excellent fruit in Japan, the possibility of the develop-

Digitized by Google

ment of the peninsula will become not merely a probability, but a certainty. When the three teachers reached Korea they found there a school for interpreters taught by a Mr. Halifax, a man who, though not a scholar, yet deserved all praise for his attainments, which were self-acquired. He was an Englishman, and had been, it was said, a common sailor. He had studied telegraphy, and had gone to Korea to take a position in the telegraph service. Disappointed in this, he had secured the opening of a school for training interpreters, and, considering the opportunities he had had, did very good work. We hoped this school would be continued, as we foresaw that were this not done, possibly we should lose our best scholars through the demand for interpreters at the legations, at the foreign office and in various other departments. As interpreters commanded from twenty-five to one hundred dollars per month, a large sum for a Korean, the inducements such positions would offer would likely take from us our best men. Unfortunately, the school was shut up. Mr. Halifax blamed the teachers, though, as said above, this course was against our wishes. The expected did happen, and one or two of the best scholars were detailed to this kind of work. We consoled ourselves with the reflection that our scholars were thus put into positions of usefulness, and could make a return for their tuition and support under the government in subserving the interests of civilization.

Digitized by Google

But the above two schools are not the only places where instruction in the English language and in Western science was given. The two principal missions have schools where daily lessons are the rule. In the Methodist mission a large part of the time of the clerical members is devoted to instruction in English and the elementary branches. Of course there is more or less religious instruction given there, as the superintendent is resolved that, since the school is paid for by mission funds and many of the scholars are supported in the same way, the instruction shall not be irreligious. This school is training men whom the government is already putting into its offices. Interpreters are going out from the school into government service, carrying with them new ideas concerning the world and the relations of man to man and of nation to nation. The Methodist Church is thus contributing to the development of Korea.

The Presbyterian mission, under the sanction of His Majesty, has established an orphanage for boys and one for girls. These boys and girls are regularly indentured, and are given up for training in all respects. Under the care of the Rev. H. G. Underwood, D. D. what is regarded as the most promising feature of the Presbyterian mission to Korea has been wisely managed. The boys are being trained in such a way that they will be the peers of their associates when they come to manhood. Not only is instruction in English given them every

Digitized by Google



Great East Gate.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

day, but they have instructions in Korean and Chinese. In this way they are being fitted to go from the school right into the cabinet of the king; for not only would their English acquirements secure them high recognition in official circles, but this, supplemented by proficiency in the Chinese classics, ensures prominence in public station. We shall have something more to say, in a later chapter, on the influence of this orphanage in the development of the kingdom.—So much for educational steps.

In the direction of the development of the military power much has been attempted. The native fire-arms of Korea are of course very ineffective as compared with modern Western weapons. Accordingly several battalions have been armed with modern breech-loaders, and, I believe, some with magazine rifles. Not the least curious of the sights to be seen on the king's parades is the appearance of companies marching side by side, one carrying the old flint-locks, or match-locks fired with punk, and the other armed with breech-loaders and sabre bayonets. In line with this new equipment was the purchase of several gatling-guns, and practice with these is frequent, especially as the noise is pleasing to His Majesty. Equipment for a powder-manufactory has also been purchased and put in place. The uniform of most of the soldiers has been changed from its picturesque though somewhat inconvenient form, and is supposed now to be modeled after

Digitized by Google

the Western military style; but as the material is dyed cotton, and the dye fades with all degrees of irregularity, and since the cut of the clothing is decidedly *sui generis*, the aspect of the companies on march is peculiar rather than picturesque. The government has made provision for the instruction of the soldiers by engaging military instructors from the United States. In 1886 four of these were secured, one of whom was an American who had seen service in Japan, the other three being officers of the militia in different parts of the United States, two of them men who had fought in the Civil War. The youngest two of these men came out full of pluck and energy, and amused those who had had more experience with Oriental life, and especially with Korean inertia, with accounts of the reforms they were going to institute and the transformations they would effect in the appearance and effectiveness of the army. But months wore on, and even a start was hardly made. They found that the reluctance to give foreigners control hampered and opposed them. The cadet corps could not be turned out at reveille. The soldiers had hardly any idea of military discipline. Precision and punctuality were alike lacking. Soldiers served for their rice, and they had no *esprit de corps*. While the instructors were treated with all courtesy and consideration, effective use of their acquirements was not made because of the sloth, indifference and distrust of the officials. Added to this was the impecuniosity of the

Digitized by Google

government. The salaries of the four military instructors amounted to 1150 *yen* ($920 in gold) per month. The income of the government is a very uncertain factor. There was a lack of business-like management on the part of officials, and it soon became apparent that no provision had been made for paying the salaries of the American officers. This caused inconvenience to the instructors, and, naturally, some impatience was manifested on their part. One of them wrote articles for some home papers, and then for some of the Anglo-Chinese periodicals, and as his remarks were not complimentary his dismissal was ordered by the government. At the same time charges of another character were made against another of the officers, and he also was dismissed. These two, being under contracts which had been negotiated by the American minister, refused to consider themselves dismissed unless salary was paid them for the time for which they had contracted. Consequently their claims were entered through the legation, but it was only after a considerable time had elapsed, and after many negotiations between the legation and the Korean government, that settlement was made. There are two officers on duty trying to effect changes in the discipline and effectiveness of the army, but their efforts do not meet with the success which like efforts on a more energetic people would probably produce. It will be seen, then, that there is an attempt to model the army after a

Digitized by Google

European or American pattern. Native dress has been discarded, native weapons thrown aside and preparation made to produce the power needed to carry on war. But the position of Korea is like Switzerland in this respect. The very largest army she can raise could not carry on a successful war. Were she to arm all her available fighting force, to call upon every male capable of bearing arms, she could not oppose with any success the forces of either Japan or China. Her men are undrilled, her resources are undeveloped, she has no weapons, and there is no military obstacle in the way of a regiment of experienced soldiers marching the length of the land, carrying everything before them. Her soldiers are available for guard duty about the palace and as policemen within the capital. Her hopes of peace rest not in her ability to command it by an army, but in the interests of the neighboring nations to maintain her independence and neutrality for their own sake. Any money spent on her army which looks beyond this is wasted, and shows a lack of appreciation of her needs. No movement has been made for fortifying the keys of the capital or for replacing the native cannon with modern guns. The government is as yet too poor. It is trying even now to borrow money; but its shortsightedness is manifest even in this, that the privilege asked for as security for the money—namely, the working of the coal-mines—it is unwilling to turn over to foreigners, the

Digitized by Google

only means as yet of making them productive and of beginning the development of resources.

In a third way Korea has started on Western paths. In her treaties the right to admit and to send diplomatic officers is given. Korea has made use of this right. The ranking diplomatic agent at the court of Seoul is the minister of the United States. Japan puts her interests in the country into the hands of a chargé d'affaires. France has sent a "commissionaire." Russia has at the capital a chargé d'affaires. Germany is represented by a consul-general, and England sends only a consul or vice-consul. Korea has representatives in only two countries, the United States and Japan. Another embassy was started to Europe, but by intrigue on the part of the Chinese it was prevented from leaving the Chinese port whence they were to sail. Of this more will be said in the chapter on the relations of Korea with China and Japan. In the United States the embassy has been received with great favor. The simplicity, earnestness, good nature and wonder at our civilization displayed by the Korean representatives, together with the modest and winning ways of Mrs. Yi, the lady in charge of the legation, have endeared the Koreans to our people, and won much good-will among Americans for the ex-hermit nation. The harassments of the king in relation to this have been particularly grievous. They can only be hinted at here. It was upon the advice of the Chinese viceroy that Korea

Digitized by Google

made the first treaty with a Western nation. Of course the power to make a treaty supposes autonomy. China sought to have incorporated in that treaty with the United States a clause acknowledging the suzerainty of China. Certainly no treaty could be made under such conditions, since treaties can exist only between *sovereign* powers. This point was therefore abandoned by the Chinese, who by that very act, abetting (as they did) the act of making a treaty, acknowledged the independence of Korea. But after the treaty was signed and Korea made ready to send embassies and representatives, the government of China began to protest, claimed a veto power over the appointment, and the Chinese "resident" at Seoul went so far as to seize a minister who was sent on a mission. But the mission was sent, and, as stated above, Korea now has representatives abroad who are winning golden opinions for the little kingdom. Korea has also in various countries merchants who act as her consuls, though as yet there is no business demanding their attention.

Other advances and attempts have been made, the fruits of which have not as yet been realized. In 1884, under the administration of a radical government, preparations had been made to enter the postal union. The stamps had been printed and all arrangements completed for the performance of this important function of the government. A banquet was held at the foreign office to rejoice over and celebrate the consummation of

Digitized by Google

this work. While the banquet was in progress Min Yong Ik, the confidential agent of the king, staggered into the banqueting-hall, covered with blood flowing from numerous wounds. An attempt had been made by the radicals to assassinate him because he was supposed to have drawn back from the policy of advance. An emeute followed. The radicals fled because of the revulsion of feeling caused by their bloody action. The feeling of hatred to the foreigners was fanned by the conservative or Chinese party. For a few days there was danger of an uprising which would sweep away every foreigner in the country. The strangers at the capital patrolled their compounds with loaded rifles day and night. Several of the conspirators were caught and executed, but the ringleaders escaped to Japan. Gradually the excitement died out; people saw that the trouble was not due to the foreigners, but to hasty and ill-balanced officials who could not make progress slowly, and the resentment against outsiders little by little faded away. But the post-office was defunct. The Korean postage stamps are sought by collectors because they are a curiosity, having never been used. Though mails are distributed in Korea, it is by the Japanese government, which maintains offices, collects all the revenue and does all the work arising from this source.

Another direction in which it was hoped progress would be made and in which steps have been taken

Digitized by Google

is in the establishment of a national mint. The coin of Korea is the cash (strictly, a "five-cash" piece), a piece varying in value from one-fifth to one-fourth of a cent. This is a rough coin made of brass or copper with a square hole in the centre. It is made in a clumsy manner at native mints, and is rude and rough in its make-up, besides being variable in quality and weight. These are strung on strings of straw, two hundred on a string. It will be noticed that the unit of value is very small. The value of the cash fluctuates with its abundance. At times four hundred and twenty of these pieces may be bought for a Japanese *yen* (value seventy-five to ninety cents, American gold), while at times not over two hundred and seventy can be obtained for the same. The unit of calculation is not one of these pieces, but one-fifth of one, for besides these larger cash there is a smaller coin, not current at the capital, whose value is much less than the other kind. Thus it is seen there is no coin which is current throughout the kingdom. For larger transactions the Mexican dollar used to be current, but the Chinese had so tampered with it that a professional *shroff* or expert was needed to detect the light and spurious coins, and so the Japanese *yen* displaced it. These and other considerations, especially the clumsiness of the native coin, led to the suggestion of the establishment of a mint. Experts from the royal mints of Germany were sent for, a spacious site was allotted and build-

Digitized by Google

ings were erected for the coinage of a new national currency. The best machinery was bought and placed in position, designs were made and dies cut, and in 1888 the mint was completed, the wheels revolved a few times, a couple of hundred copper coins were turned out for the inspection of the king, who paid a visit to the new toy, and then the wheels were stopped. Since then the machinery has stood idle and rusting, the German expert has returned to his home, and the work of nearly two years, at an expense of perhaps two hundred thousand dollars, remains as so much outlay without any corresponding return. And yet there is said to be exported yearly from Korea one million dollars' worth of gold-dust! There is a strong possibility that visitors and guardians have carried off many a brass nut or shining bar to sell at junk-shops for a few cash, and to replace these pieces may cost hundreds of dollars if ever the mint is put in operation. It may be stated here that when the teachers first drew their salaries from the government they were paid in cash, and though the amount was only one hundred and sixty dollars per month, it took five men to carry the salary of one man for one month. Our cash-boxes were shaped very much like the bins used for keeping grain in stables, and would hold from two hundred and fifty to six hundred dollar's worth of cash. If a person went shopping down town, it became necessary to take a man to carry the money, as a dollar's worth of it weighed about eight pounds avoirdu-

Digitized by Google

pois. The clumsiness of this medium can thus be seen, and yet it is the basis of all trade.

Another endeavor was to raise the standard of agriculture. A farm was set aside for model cultivation. Foreign seeds were bought, a master farmer was hired and the farm was stocked with animals for breeding purposes. This was for a time a success, but mismanagement soon came in, farming implements were left uncared for, the careless habits of the Koreans became too much for the overseer, and his death, which occurred rather suddenly, left the farm without a master to see that ends were kept up. The government in this, as in most of its undertakings, was hampered by its poverty, and the improvements needed to make effective the labor invested never came. Perhaps the best result to be looked for is the improvement in the breed of horses. As before stated, Korean horses are mere ponies. They are not used as draught animals. Oxen are employed to pull the only wheeled vehicles used—huge, cumbrous, two-wheeled affairs, the friction of which is poorly managed. Ponies are used to carry burdens, and they make journeys of thirty miles a day with a load of about two hundred pounds. They are employed also as saddle-horses, and are serviceable little beasts. But it is hoped that the breed can be improved, and one of the principal aims of the farm was to accomplish this end. One point gained through this model farm was the wider cultivation of wheat. Except in the north, this grain

Digitized by Google

was not raised, but now it may be seen growing, though still only in small patches, in many fields in the neighborhood of the capital. The manager of the farm did some good by offering seeds to the Koreans who would use them. Some few have accepted and sown these foreign articles, but only very rarely as yet is there any view of American plants growing in native gardens. Koreans in this respect seem less receptive and adaptive than the Japanese, who welcome any addition to their list of edibles. The table of the king is often supplied from the farm, and the members of the royal family are familiar with the taste of many vegetables commonly seen only on foreigners' tables.

One of the interesting sights of the capital was the hospital. It seemed a wonderful thing in 1886 to find, in the capital of a kingdom which, less than four years before, had been sealed to the world, a hospital the running expenses of which were in large part paid by the king. After Dr. Allen had in such a providential way gained the confidence of the court, he found an opportunity to tell of the means employed to reach and benefit by the healing art many of the poverty-stricken in our own country. This caught the attention of the king, and soon grounds were set aside, buildings prepared and a hospital was in full operation. Not only was this the case, but soon afterward the hospital in connection with the Methodist mission received the sanction of the king, and a name in Chinese was fixed over the

Digitized by Google

gate as a sign to Koreans that the work done within had the sanction of the government.

Owing to the death of Dr. Heron, one of the medical missionaries of the Presbyterian Board, the work of the hospital was necessarily dropped. We understand, however, that a physician is going out from New York, under contract with the government, to carry on the work. It speaks volumes for the kindly feeling of the king that such work should be provided for out of the national funds, or what is practically the same—for there is nothing like a national treasury in Korea, the national money really belonging to the king as being the government.

We have had occasion to speak of the custom of signaling daily along the tops of the hills the news of the peace and welfare of the kingdom. Alongside of this mediæval system of despatching news must be placed the modern way of using the electric current, since for years the capital has been connected by wire with the southern port of Fusan, with its own port of Chemulpo and with the capital of China, and so with the whole outside world. Korea, the hermit nation of 1882, in telegraphic communication with the isles of the West in 1885!

In the domestic life of the nation but little change has been caused by the opening of treaty relations with other nations. But few Koreans have changed their manner of living. The general poverty of the people

Digitized by Google



Little West Gate.

Page 246.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

would preclude indulgence in luxuries, such as most articles of foreign make would be considered. In the palace, in the way of furniture, much has been brought in from Europe and the United States. The king's apartments are furnished in foreign and luxurious style. Besides this, table furniture and kitchen equipments of foreign styles are provided for the palace use, for often guests are entertained by order of the king. At such times His Majesty is not visibly present, but is represented by a mandarin. A latticed screen covered with paper shuts off a part of the banqueting-hall, and behind that screen the royal family often assemble, and after punching holes in the paper a view of the banqueting guests is had by the members of the family. A few of the wealthier men in the capital were very much captivated by some spring mattresses seen in foreigners' houses, and they have obtained others for their own use. In the capital there are shops, kept by Chinese and Japanese, where various commodities of foreign manufacture are exposed for sale. As elsewhere mentioned, one of the chief attractions in these stores is the cuckoo clock, and many of these have found their way into the homes of the people. The most extensively used of foreign commodities is the cotton goods in the way of sheeting muslins, out of which clothing for every-day wear is made. Of this thousands of bales are imported yearly. The revenue from imports is increasing largely each year, proving that Western products are

Digitized by Google

taking their place in the domestic economy of the people, and with each importation and its use among the people a wider interest in the nation from which the article came is excited, and so progress is made.

It is yet too early to prophesy as to the national progress these varied agencies will bring about. Much, very much, will depend on the character of the representatives of the various nations who may drift or be sent to Korea. As yet, it is fortunate that most foreigners have been of a very respectable class. The character of the diplomatic and consular corps has been, in general, above reproach. The missionaries are men who, with a commendable zeal for the spread of the tidings they bear, have a knowledge of the prejudices of the Koreans, and judgment sufficiently balanced to prevent the use of means which shock and alarm the conservatism of Confucianists and arouse the religious jealousy of the officials. The poverty of the country offers few inducements for grasping tradesmen to settle there, consequently but two firms have dealings of any importance with the people. The populace at large is being led on gradually to the realization of an influx of foreign ideas. The money spent by missionaries and government officers in the country brings benefits to many poor householders. Were the country left to follow its desires, and not harassed by the interference and domination of China, a gradual approach to Western ways might be anticipated. As it is, the

Digitized by Google

chances are so balanced and the disturbing causes so many that a chapter is needed to discuss them and to give data for the determination of the probable result of the present efforts toward Occidental enlightenment.

A matter not to be passed over lightly is the abolition (February 6, 1886) of the hereditary transmission of slavery—a grand move for a "barbarous" nation to make of its own volition!

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIII.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

A QUESTION which is not only interesting in itself, but also important in its bearings upon the economic and religious development of the peninsula, is the independence or autonomy of Korea. Is Korea an independent State, or a vassal State subject to China? The decision is not easily reached. On one side, in favor of the independence of the kingdom is the act of acknowledgment of her independence by Japan, the United States, Russia, France and Italy in making treaties with her. Treaties are negotiated only between independent States. It must also be borne in mind that the treaties were entered into by the advice of China. Against the autonomy of Korea may be cited the strenuous insistence on the part of the Chinese, since the treaties were made, upon the claim of suzerainty over Korea; the interference, or attempted interference, of the Chinese in the management of the finances and the development of the resources of the kingdom; the course of action of the Chinese "resident minister" at the Korean capital, which is consistent only with his claim that he is the representative of the over-lord of

Digitized by Google

the king of Korea; and also certain acts of the king of Korea and his government toward China, which, when interpreted after Western fashion, seem to lend force to the assertion that not even the king himself believes in his independence of the emperor.

Historically, both China and Japan have claimed Korea as a portion of their respective empires, and have founded their claims upon acknowledged and indisputable conquest. The latter power, however, gave up all claim to ownership when, in 1876, she negotiated a treaty with the hermit nation. In the preceding year China had practically conceded the independence of Korea in disclaiming any responsibility for the acts which led to the Japanese storming the Kang-Wha fort. To this last declaration should be added the statement (cited by Mr. Rockhill in his able article printed in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* for 1888) of an emperor of China about the middle of the seventeenth century: "Kao-li (Korea) is a small region in the East, *and is not under the rule of the middle kingdom.*"

This question has been ably discussed by two gentlemen —by Mr. Rockhill, quoted above, and by Judge Denny, late foreign adviser to the king, in his pamphlet *China and Korea*, privately printed in 1888. The former draws his arguments from historical documents of the Chinese, and his statements lead almost irresistibly to the conclusion that up to the last few years China

Digitized by Google

regarded Korea as independent. Judge Denny concedes the *tributary* relation of Korea to China, but shows that the condition of a tributary State does not necessarily in any case imply vassalage, and that it certainly does not carry that conclusion in the case under consideration.

Looked at from a diplomatic standpoint, Korea is a sovereign State. She has made treaties, while China, knowing that international law holds that to be the act of a sovereign State, has looked on and permitted (assuming that she could have stopped it) the assumption of treaty obligations. China has herself made a treaty with Korea, though she has called that treaty "Commercial and trade regulations for the subjects of China *and* Korea." Yet, guarded as this title was meant to be, it in mentioning the two countries gives up China's contention, for if Korea is subject to China, there are no subjects of Korea, but only those of China. The question, therefore, naturally arises, If the case, diplomatically considered, is so clear, what need is there to discuss it again? The answer is, that though Korea made treaties with the full and free consent and knowledge of the Chinese government, and although China knew the consequences of such acts with reference to her claims of suzerainty, the Chinese government has since the making of the treaties reasserted those claims, and has used its power as a stronger nation to interfere in the internal affairs of Korea (as when it prohibited

Digitized by Google

the opening of Ping Yang as a treaty port in 1887) and in the external relations (as when it demanded that the foreign representatives of Korea at other courts should consult with and be introduced by the Chinese representatives at those courts). China has done more than this: she has made interpolated copies of the treaties between the United States and Korea, and in these copies she has inserted an article stating that the United States, in making the treaty with Korea, acknowledged the suzerainty of China over Korea! Such a copy was, in 1887, in the possession of the British vice-consul at the Korean capital, and was produced by him as proof that the United States did not regard Cho Son as a sovereign power. The existence and the persistent reiteration of such pretensions make it necessary to review very briefly the arguments for and against the sovereignty of China over the hermit kingdom.

The arguments in favor of this sovereignty are as follows:

(1) The subjection of the peninsula by arms. The history of the hermit kingdom, as found in both Korea and China, bears out this contention. While not infrequently the Koreans repelled, with terrible loss to the invaders, the hosts of China, and drove them out of the peninsula, at other times submission had to be made to superior force and abilities.

(2) Following upon this were the demands made upon the rulers of Cho Son for aid against the rebels

Digitized by Google

attempting to overthrow the Chinese power, and punishment for aid given to those rebels.

(3) The undisputed and indisputable fact that tribute has been and still is regularly sent to the Chinese emperor by the king.

(4) The tenor of a letter sent to the emperor by the king, apparently asking permission to send representatives to foreign courts.

(5) The way in which the king receives the envoy sent in acknowledgment of tribute or on special occasions. His Majesty usually goes *outside the walls* of the capital and meets the envoy, instead of awaiting his appearance in the palace grounds and in the audience-chamber. A more compromising fact than this was a visit paid by the king to the temporary residence of the envoy in the capital in 1890, something which it is impossible to reconcile with even Korean ideas of urbanity. This act, more than any other since the treaties were made, staggered the asserters of Korean autonomy.

(6) Very significant, not to say perplexing, is the bearing of Chinese officials and their suites in the country, both to Koreans and toward foreigners. For instance, the present Chinese "minister resident for political and commercial affairs" (so does China designate her representative at the Korean capital) has dared nominally to memorialize, really to lecture, the king upon the method of conducting the development of

Digitized by Google



Gate Outside City, where King meets Chinese Envoy. Page 254.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

the resources of the country. This same representative has more than once forced his way into the presence of the king and reproached him for his method of conducting business. Eventually the king gave orders that Yuan was not to be admitted under any pretext to an audience. The general attitude of Koreans toward Chinese, and the feeling of the latter that they are above law, is shown by the following experience of Mr. Foulk, a naval attache of the United States legation at Seoul (in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1885, pp. 324, 325): "In one of the buildings of the *yongmun* was residing a Chinese official with a small retinue of servants. The replies of Coreans to my questions in regard to the presence of this officer were evasive, though I learned that, in spite of the high rank of the Corean governor, he was bound to call daily upon the Chinese officer. While the strictest orders were given —and well executed, too—that the people were not to invade my quarters out of curiosity, some of the Chinese did so insolently, a few soft words being the only remonstrance from the governor's policemen, to which little or no attention was paid. This incident only tends to confirm the impression I had formed in Seoul of the cowering disposition of the Corean government to the attitude of China toward Corea, the only solution of which may be found in a written agreement between the two countries, made two years ago, after the entrance of a Chinese commissioner and three thousand Chinese soldiers. This

Digitized by Google

agreement seems to be wholly unknown to the Western powers."

Concerning this agreement Mr. Foulk further says (p. 337): "It has been positively stated to me, though not until they seemed forced to divulge it, by So Kwang Pom and Kim Ok Kiun, that the result of this use of Chinese troops [in Dec., 1884] was the exactment of a new agreement between China and Corea, by which the Chinese obtained such rights in Corea as made her more intimately a dependency of China than had ever been the case before. The king and the progressive Coreans looked upon the American treaty as the wedge which, at least politically, freed Corea from China, and it was hailed by them with great joy. It may then be understood how great was their chagrin to find Corea, by the action of Cho and the Mins before the American treaty was yet ratified, placed anew or more rigidly than ever subservient to China." Mr. Foulk goes on to say that this anxiety was relieved when Minister Foote arrived, since the treaty was ratified; that this meant to the Koreans either that the United States meant to force the recognition of Korean independence, understanding the position of Korea to China; or else that that position was unknown, and so the American treaty would give a leverage whence to work for the completion of the attempts at securing entire autonomy.

The above seem to me to embrace all the arguments

Digitized by Google

to be brought to support the assertion of China's sovereignty over Korea. Against these are to be adduced the following:

(1) Prior to 1882, *not even Chinese* were allowed to reside in the country or to land on its shores.

(2) On the occasions when envoys visited the court of Korea from China, the suite of the envoy was limited to a very few persons. All others were left behind at the Korean border.

(3) In order to guard against the surreptitious embrace of Chinese, a neutral strip was maintained between the two countries. Although this was done at first by the desire of China, when, in later years, the Chinese wished to lead in the settlement of this strip, Korea always objected, and the objections were acknowledged by China.

(4) In many cases, to the demands of the emperor for aid against the rebels or assailants of China, not only was no help given, but no reply was vouchsafed and no notice was taken of the demand.

(5) Statements of Chinese emperors, such as that cited by Mr. Rockhill in his quotation above; also disclaimers on the part of the Chinese government of any responsibility for overt action by Koreans, on the ground of lack of jurisdiction or sovereignty. Such an occasion was presented when the Japanese, in 1875, prior to making a treaty with Korea, sent to China to ascertain her position in regard to the hermit kingdom.

Digitized by Google

(6) Though Korea is undoubtedly *tributary* to China, it is argued strongly both by Mr. Rockhill and Judge Denny, who support their position by citations from authorities on international law, that tributary relations do not affect the sovereignty of a state. For example, Mr. Rockhill cites the action of England, which, after the conquest and annexation of Burmah, made arrangements for the continuance of the customary tribute to China. Yet no one would assert that England is tributary to China or that Burmah is not a British possession.

(7) When Commodore Shufeldt was attempting to negotiate a treaty with the Korean government, the Chinese viceroy sought to have incorporated into the treaty an acknowledgment of China's suzerainty. Of course the commodore replied that no such thing was possible. A treaty could be negotiated only on the basis of Korea's independence. The contention was dropped by the Chinese, who thereby implicitly abandoned their claim.

(8) The actual negotiation of treaties with the several powers creates a presumption in favor of Korean autonomy; and

(9) This presumption is heightened by the fact that under the operation of those treaties Korea both receives representatives of foreign powers and is herself represented at the capitals of other nations.

(10) China seized the opportunity presented to make

Digitized by Google

a treaty with the king, under which she might trade with the peninsula, though she attempted to evade the consequences and nullify all inferences naturally to be drawn by calling her treaty "Commercial and trade regulations for the subjects of China and Korea," and by giving to her representative the title of "minister resident for political and commercial affairs."

(11) Under the provisions of this treaty, Chinese merchants flocked to Korea and took up their residence there, a thing previously *not allowed*, and a concession granted to China only after the same had been allowed to other powers.

(12) The support of the claims of independence by the United States and Russia in sending ministers and receiving ambassadors from the king of Korea.

(13) While Mr. Rockhill confesses that he is not sure how to interpret the letter of the king to the emperor regarding the sending of representatives, he points out that the terms used are those of an equal speaking to an equal. One familiar with the laws of etiquette in the Orient, where not only the form of words used but even the words themselves are indicative of the relative position of speaker and addressed, will see in the fact pointed out by Mr. Rockhill, and in the further fact that this assumption of equality with the emperor by the king of Korea passed without comment, almost certain proof that the latter regards himself as an independent sovereign. Mr. Rockhill shows, further,

Digitized by Google

that the expressions employed on the occasions of interchange of courtesies between the two countries are those "used between neighboring countries which are on a footing of equality."

Striking a balance between the arguments for and against the independence of Korea, the preponderance of evidence seems greatly against the pretensions of China. In fact, as before hinted, the only facts which seem at this time to point to any other conclusion are the overt acts of the Chinese "minister resident" at the Korean capital and the cowering or timid attitude of the people and rulers of the country.

This attitude is due to a realization, born of intercourse with other nations, of the real weakness of Korea as compared with the strength of China's immense resources. "*Great* Cho Son" has assumed her real position in the eyes of her rulers. Uncertainty as to the amount of support she would receive from other powers in a direct and decisive rejection of the Chinese assumptions and an expression of indignation at the interference in the conduct of internal affairs, makes Korea's rulers seem weak and vacillating. And yet those who have been longest in the East, and who know the temper of China, of Korea, of Japan and of Russia, are not slow to express the opinion, first, that were the king to take a decided stand, China would back down and withdraw her claims; second, Japan would not permit any action prejudicial to her own interests, such as the occupation

Digitized by Google

of the peninsula would undoubtedly be; and, third, that Russia would intervene with decision in the same contingency. Japan has a great interest in the autonomy of the peninsula. With Korea a Chinese province, Fusan affords a starting-point for a Chinese attack within a few hours' sail of Japan. Korea independent is a buffer between the two countries. In like fashion, Korea would become a starting-point for Chinese naval forces against the Russian port of Vladivostock. Clearly, then, it is for the interest of both those countries to maintain the independence of the peninsula. At the same time, one would imagine that China would see it for her interests to use an autonomous Korea as a fence against both Russia and Japan. There seems to be every reason, therefore, why the foreign adviser should urge the government to reject decisively the claims of China, to demand from the Chinese government the withdrawal from Korean territory of all Chinese subjects who in any way disturb the peace of the country, and to insist that the interference of the emperor in matters of Korean internal development and external relations shall cease once and for all.

The reasons for the change in the attitude of China toward Korea are hard to define. Judge Denny thinks the "policy of absorption" was decided in 1885, two years and a half after the claims of suzerainty had been given up. Undoubtedly it was brought about by the

Digitized by Google

wiles and intrigues of Yuan, the present "commissioner" of the Chinese government in Seoul. This man is a typical Oriental, of no special ability, but with an abnormal amount of cunning and duplicity. He was formerly a subordinate, but was elevated to the commissionership in 1885. The king's affability and desire to maintain friendly relations with all treaty powers have been seized upon by Yuan to forward his own schemes. This latter, inflated by his importance, and by the fact that probably at his suggestion the claims of China have been reasserted, has taken upon himself to advise the king in disorderly and impudent "memorials" and to force his way into the royal presence. It was doubtless this gentleman who suggested, if he did not execute, the bogus treaties referred to, containing an acknowledgment of the vassal relations of Korea to China. He stands convicted of having smuggled *under his official seal* a large case of ginseng, which in a Korean would have been a capital offence. He has thus transgressed the laws of the country. He has shown his contempt and insolence by riding in his chair inside the palace grounds, a thing never done by a native Korean, and so has trampled on the custom which has been honored and observed by the representatives of all other powers. Judge Denny also charges him (the evidence is known by the writer to be clear and convincing) with being the author of a plot to dethrone and abduct the king in order to make

Digitized by Google

a pretext for the interference of China. Full provisions were made for carrying out this plot, with the accompaniments of riot, arson and murder. The government of China has been informed of this, and has been asked to withdraw the mischief-maker, but as yet has disregarded all appeals. The pity is that the king does not make a peremptory demand for the withdrawal of Yuan, and if this is not acceded to, give him his passports and escort him to the frontier. A firm stand and resolute demand would almost certainly produce the desired result. At any rate, the status of Korea would then be certainly known, and the condition could not be worse than the present uncertain state of affairs.

The relations between Japan and the peninsula are, officially, most excellent. There is at times some friction of feeling between the populace and the Japanese merchants, owing to the disposition of the latter to drive hard bargains and claim their pound of flesh, but in general there is nothing but good wishes on the part of the Japanese people, and the most ardent hopes on the part of the Japanese government for the prosperity of Korea. With Russia the relations are most friendly. The Russian chargé d'affaires, Mr. Waeber, and his most accomplished wife are favorites at the capital, and the influence of Russia has been exerted positively in favor of Korean independence.

There is hardly any need to speak of the friendly feelings existing between the United States and Korea.

Digitized by Google

The uniform courtesy which the United States representative has ever met and the consideration with which his communications have been received have made the duties of the ministers a pleasure, and not a task, and they have each retired from their post with earnest wishes for Korea's success. It is well known how favorable an impression the hermit kingdom's representatives have made in Washington. The simplicity and good taste with which they have conducted themselves have endeared to those who have met them all the members of the legation. By Koreans the United States has been looked on almost as a parent. Its methods are thought the best, its people the most kind and its civilization the most advanced. Americans receive in Korea especially kind treatment on account of their nationality. All Americans in Korea who have so conducted themselves as to merit the approval of the government have no reason to complain of their experience. A few who do complain should blame themselves for a course which has alienated from them the good-will of the government and the continuance of its kindly regard. And these kind feelings and cordial relations have much to do with the good prospects to be spoken of in the chapter on missions.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIV.

FOREIGN LIFE IN KOREA.

IT is the common experience that those who have once tasted of life in the East are loath to return to Occidental civilization. This is true also of those who have lived in Korea. There are several reasons for this. Perhaps foremost among these is the fact that life is easier in the East. A visitor or tourist soon recognizes the absence of that rush and jostle which is characteristic of business in, say, New York or Chicago. Work goes on with more deliberation. The feverish haste and heavy pressure which are characteristic of our way of doing business are wholly lacking in the Orient. There the bulk of population is of course Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Hindoo, and the general distaste for hurry and the predisposition to a dignified and leisurely method of procedure tones down even Yankee bustle into what approaches deliberateness. There is something about the slowness of motion in Eastern climes which is to the Occidental at first exasperating, afterward restful. The hours of labor are shorter. Less frequent means of communication beget greater deliberation over correspondence. The enervat-

Digitized by Google

ing influences of climate undoubtedly have their effect in toning down vigor of action. Consequently the energy which an American is wont to display on his first entrance into Oriental life soon wears down to more measured movement. This is doubtless one reason for the hold which Eastern life takes upon Western-born people.

Another powerful factor is the position which persons from other countries take among the natives. Even in Japan a foreigner is recognized as having superior abilities, as having been under the guidance and training of greater forces than the Japanese of an equal station in life. The very quickness and decisiveness of his touch in matters of business, art or mechanics doubtless contributes to this end. While Orientals excel in matters requiring patience—for instance, in the carving of a set of ivory chessmen or the production of a piece of lacquered ware—the Occidental excels in the commercial faculty, and for an equivalent period of time will produce a sum of wealth which seems to the Oriental like the realization of a wonderful dream. So in Korea the college graduate seems to be a man of wonderful attainments. The man of middle station in society at home ranks very high in Korean society, and to almost all foreigners the tribute of precedence over natives is readily yielded. Thus a sort of flattery to which close observers, and particularly cynics, say humanity is especially subject is paid to the foreigner who goes for residence in the Korean peninsula. He finds the

Digitized by Google



Great South Gate.

Page 266.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

people in the street making way for him. When any spectacle is to be seen, the place of honor is reserved for his accommodation. The high place at feasts falls to him. He is treated with a consideration which is not infrequently the cause of an increase in the perimeter of his cranium. Woe to him, then, if he has to return to Western life! When he looks for people, mechanics and day-laborers, to turn out for him on the sidewalk, a jostle recalls to his mind that in this country all men are "free and equal." Whereas on the other side of the Pacific his opinion was asked and listened to with respect, he finds himself here a very inconsequential sort of person, carrying only the influence which his mental calibre and his real worth earn for him. Naturally, then, he yearns for a return to his life in the East. In this respect life in Korea is very agreeable to the foreigner.

That country has as yet been peculiarly fortunate in the class of foreigners who have gone there. The majority so far are missionaries, men who have been singularly disinterested, and have in several instances gained not only the respect of the community, but the confidence of the king and court. Nearly all the other foreigners there have belonged either to the diplomatic and consular corps or to the customs, or have gone out for educational work. The merchants have been few, for the commercial advantages to be gained will not sustain the competition of large numbers or of numerous houses.

Digitized by Google

To the poverty of the country, then, is due the immunity from an incursion of foreigners carrying to the natives the whiskey-jug which has been the curse of so many countries, especially of Africa.

The houses which foreigners occupy are, with but one or two exceptions, native houses altered by building additions, knocking out partitions and adapting them in various ways to our different habits. As has already been mentioned, the rooms of a house are very small; but since the partitions are often nothing but a framework of wood covered with paper, they are easily removed, and several rooms thus thrown into one make comfortable living-quarters. Foreigners usually purchase houses from the better class, and as these houses generally have plenty of ground around them, they are easily transformed, with but little outlay, into pleasant abodes with the accessories of lawn, flower-garden and often tennis-courts. Repapered and furnished, their paper-covered windows replaced with others of glass, these native houses make very comfortable residences both in summer and winter. The abundance of windows and doors makes ventilation in summer easy, while these same vents can in winter be so sealed up with the tough paper which can be obtained there in great abundance as to be comfortable and cheery in the steady cold of winter. The shape of the houses, built, as we have shown, around a hollow court, allows plenty of light in all the rooms, even though the eaves do over-

Digitized by Google

hang four or more feet. Of furniture almost nothing can be obtained in Korea. Cabinets, of which we have spoken, brass vessels of various sorts, china water-pitchers, earthen crocks for keeping grain, meals, sugar, etc., and matting and grass rugs are about the only native articles to be obtained toward housekeeping there. Of course, in Japan and in China all sorts of foreign stores sent from England and the United States are to be obtained, and imitations of these, made by Chinese and Japanese, can also be bought. The furniture of Japanese manufacture is, however, to be shunned. It is made to sell, not to use, and a Japanese chair, for example, requires constant tinkering to keep it in a condition in which one would willingly trust himself upon it. As a result, those who are wise take with them all stores from this country or England, since to buy the same articles in Shanghai or Yokohama requires double the money. Carpets, rugs, hangings of various sorts, beds and bedding, stoves and kitchen furniture and various kinds of crockery can be bought to advantage in Japan, especially the nicer grades. Really exquisite dinner- and tea-sets can be obtained there. Of course the pocket of the purchaser can be consulted as well there as at home; but care must be taken to avoid the foreign stores, where exorbitant prices are charged. The list of productions given in the chapter on the resources of Korea shows how far native productions can be relied on for the larder. As a matter of fact, every-

Digitized by Google

thing necessary for the household can be bought in the country, of Chinese or foreign merchants established there, though at largely increased prices. Foreigners send large orders to San Francisco and to London, while Shanghai is also much resorted to. The foreign merchants of China and Japan are exceedingly courteous, and the writer has met with very kind treatment in Shanghai at the hands of Mackenzie & Co. and of others. The rule is to get all staples, such as flour, sugar, canned goods, jams and preserves, preserved meats, relishes, etc., from either London or San Francisco. From the latter place it takes at least three months to get an order, while six months are required for an order to reach London and to be filled. Beef and mutton are obtainable in the capital in such quantities as one needs, both Japanese and Chinese furnishing these supplies. Fruits in their season are obtainable, and especially the persimmon, the star fruit of the East.

In the matter of domestics there is a choice between Chinese, Japanese and Koreans, and they stand in just that order as to the amount of wages asked. A first-class Chinese "boy" (all Chinese male servants are called boys, irrespective of age) can be obtained for about twelve to fifteen dollars a month; a Japanese cook and his wife can be hired for about fifteen dollars a month; while a Korean man or boy will serve for from four to six dollars *and find himself*. Koreans are

Digitized by Google

very handy after a little teaching, and they adapt themselves very speedily to the individualities of their employers. We had a native cook who had had his training in the American legation, and was quite equal to getting up a very creditable dinner for almost any occasion. His ingenuity in producing fancy dinners out of what looked like very scanty materials did him great credit, and he could serve up chickens (a standard article of diet among foreigners in Korea) in more ways than one uninitiated would dream possible. We paid this man six dollars a month—all he asked. When we first commenced housekeeping we used to let our cook have the keys to enter the store-room and get the materials for use, but rapid diminution of the stores suggested a different plan. Still the goods seemed to vanish with remarkable quickness. We soon found that the ingenuity of our cook was displayed in other ways than in the getting up of odd dishes. It became necessary to mete out to him daily just the amount of staples required to carry us over the day. One day, after this movement had been inaugurated, the dust-cloth was called for and was nowhere to be found. Cook, whose house was only a short block away, was missed immediately from the kitchen. On his return he was asked about the missing duster, and after some search he discovered it in some corner of the kitchen. But the peculiar thing about this was that one side of the cloth was marked with flour in the center, while the edges and

Digitized by Google

corners were all marked with creases. Cook, good, thrifty fellow that he was, seeing that chances for peculation were small, had concluded that a piece of dough would be something toward subsistence, even though it were baked at home.

There is always a certain amount of uncertainty as to just what a Korean servant is going to do, which gives a spice to life in that country. We allowed to our cook daily a certain amount of cash, with which he was to furnish for that day chicken, meat for soup and garnishing. Sometimes, in order to increase his revenues, he would buy a number of chickens at once, as thus he could get them cheaper. Of course we had no objection to this. But one day cook found that a weazel had killed one of his chickens. This seemed a special providence: it saved him the necessity of using his knife. But the lady of the house had a suspicion that that chicken was meant to do duty on our table. At a certain moment she appeared in the kitchen, and found cook ready to pick the fowl preliminary to cooking it. She managed, with the aid of much English, many gestures and a little Korean, to make cook understand that we could not stomach a chicken killed in that way; but cook was somewhat reconciled when he was told that he might take it home and make use of it there as he saw fit.

Another time my wife found on the stove, an hour before lunch, a pot in which, apparently, the soup for

Digitized by Google

dinner was cooking. Examination disclosed the legs and feet (claws included), the neck, and finally the head (comb, eyes and all) of a chicken. Cook was out at the time, but when he returned he was asked if he was making soup. Temporary relief was afforded by the assurance that he was cooking those portions for his own sustenance. A new alarm was raised soon after luncheon, when the same pot was found on the stove, with the same amount of water and apparently the same contents. My wife immediately concluded that the cook was pocketing the amount of cash necessary to buy meat for soup, and was serving up chicken's extremities so cooked as to be unrecognizable. A spoon brought up from the bottom of the pot a ragged piece of meat which I recognized at once as beef, but it had to be turned over several times before the lady could be convinced that of all the vagaries a cow indulges in, she never grows a rooster's comb on any part of her anatomy.

Korean servants are very willing to learn, yet there are vexations in the way of training them that call for the exercise of much patience. At first the necessity for frequent ablutions does not appear to the natives, and constant watchfulness is necessary to have them retain the cleanliness essential in housekeeping. They pick up quickly the ways of the household, often do things in the way they have been taught for a considerable period, and then, when they have become familiar

Digitized by Google

with their duties, they begin to grow lax. It seems as if a certain amount of "toning up" in the way of scolding is requisite to keep them up to the performance of their duties. One thing peculiar about these servants is that a scolding in English, which is unintelligible to them, produces far more effect than one in Korean. The only time I ever lost my patience was when one of our boys was beating his younger brother, who was our table-boy. I had stopped the process once and forbidden him to do so again, but when he thought I was engaged he continued the chastisement. I was so angered at his brutality and his disobedience that I forgot my Korean and scolded him in English. The fellow turned pale with terror, for I had never so spoken to him and he had never seen me angry. I had often heard this peculiarity spoken of as a fact, but had never experienced it.

Curious mistakes sometimes result from the ignorance of the servants and their desire to do smart things. One time a resident desired to have for dinner some canned green peas, and gave a can to the cook with directions to prepare them. The article was new to the servant, so he set it unopened on the stove, not taking the precaution to punch a hole as a vent for steam. Suddenly a loud report was heard, and when the host, who had been entertaining his guests, rushed out into the kitchen, he found all the servants outside except the cook, who was seated on the floor, dazed, but ejaculating "no

Digitized by Google

sabby, no sabby." Peas were sprinkled in all the courses, making a careful process of elimination necessary. This incident did not detract at all from the merriment at the table.

There was at the capital a Japanese washerman who in general did very good work. It may interest housekeepers here to know that the ordinary price for washing in the East is three cents a piece, little and big, things that go in pairs, such as cuffs and hose, counting only as one piece. Owing to unsatisfactory work in some particulars, one of the ladies tried the experiment of hiring and teaching a native to act as laundryman. This lady took the precaution of herself starching the fine pieces. One day she was called away from the washing at a critical point, and when she returned she found that all the starching had been done by her washerman, who proudly told her that he had finished. When her husband tried to put on his shirt the next week, he found that that article had received starch not only in the bosom and cuffs, but all over, and was perfectly competent to stand alone and in any position.

Koreans often at first hesitate to enter a foreigner's service, but one taste acts as an appetizer, and thereafter they eagerly seek positions in a foreign household. There are two drawbacks, however: they seem to be natural peculators, not of large things, but of small, and little things are constantly missing out of the house, especially in the way of vegetables. The

Digitized by Google

other trouble is that they are not reliable. They will stay, and do well for some weeks or months, and then —well, to use a Hibernicism, turn up missing, and that at the most inconvenient time. Often in times of sickness, when they are most needed, or when company is expected to dinner, a relative of a servant will fall ill, or a family visit to the ancestral tablet must be made, which takes him away from his post. As time goes on these things happen more frequently, so that a change becomes necessary. Often a servant who has been boasted of as perfection, and on account of whom the employer has been envied by other residents, becomes unreliable, and has to be discharged. This is the drawback and the great failing of native servants, to which there are very few exceptions. They are very ingenious in the way of fashioning makeshifts for tools and instruments and kitchen utensils which we possess, but which they are without.

One drawback to life in Korea is that a large number of servants is indispensable. Various circumstances make it impossible for a housekeeper to do her own work. If one keeps a horse or a cow, a man is required to look after that. There must be a gateman, whose duty it is to look after the great gate at the street entrance, bring in the cards of visitors, carry in from outhouses wood and coal and sometimes run errands. Often a man is required for this last duty alone. There is generally an *ahmah* or nurse, especially if there is a baby; if

Digitized by Google

there is no little one, the nurse does some of the sewing and mending. Besides this, a cook is almost a necessity, and, moreover, a table-boy or boy-of-all-work is required, so that in Korea quite a retinue is necessary, for each person will perform only his own duty. Often, for a proportionate increase of pay, the gateman will perform the duties of gateman and groom or stableman, but that is about as far as retrenchment can be carried. The native gentleman has so large a retinue of servants that the natives cannot understand how a few can possibly carry on the work of a household. Reasons for maintaining a household somewhat after the Korean notions of what is fitting will be shown in the chapter on missions. Another peculiarity about Korean servants is what is called "squeezing"—an institution well known also in China. On everything brought into the house by native merchants there is a commission charged by the gateman, which is divided among the servants of the household. The consequence is that the merchant in selling the goods always allows for the amount which he must give to the servants as commission. This is the case with everything sold by native merchants. Of course they have no control over what comes from Chinese or foreign merchants. Also, if a servant is sent out to buy any article for use in the house, it is more than likely that he will charge for his services. Our cook on entering our employ bought a water-crock or jar for which he charged us eight hundred cash, but

Digitized by Google

it cost him only about three hundred. We learned in our last year in the country that for many articles bought during our first year we had paid double the amount paid by natives for similar ones.

But these Koreans are very useful in transforming apparently worthless articles into useful utensils. We used to buy kerosene in ten-gallon cases, put up in five-gallon cans. These cans, set on a broad bottom and reinforced by wooden cleats around the edges and sides, were used after cleansing as very light and useful water-buckets. Ordinary cracker-boxes or dry-goods cases were changed by the native cooper into excellent pails, wash-tubs and even bath-tubs.

Japanese servants require less training than Koreans. Japan is now so enlightened that it is not difficult to secure domestics who have had sufficient experience to enable them to do all that is required with but little teaching beyond showing the individual tastes of the family they are to serve. They are also much more efficient, and will do much more work and in a steadier manner than double the number of Koreans. The main drawback here is that they become afflicted with homesickness, and leave one on the spur of the moment and at the most inopportune times. The experience in Korea has been that one cannot rely on the permanence of Japanese help.

Perhaps the most satisfactory method is to have a Chinese head servant or steward, and give the manage-

Digitized by Google

ment largely into his hands. The Chinese make most excellent help. They are reliable and steady, and if one becomes attached to the family, he will remain with it even at much personal inconvenience. They have the knack of managing Koreans, and one Chinaman with native help will make things move very smoothly in the household. The only drawback is that Chinese help is quite costly.

In Eastern countries the great menace to health comes in the tendency to bowel complaints. Cholera is especially a scourge. From India, where it is endemic, it passes by the trade routes through Singapore up to Hong Kong, thence to Japan and so over to the peninsula. In consequence of this the utmost care has to be taken, especially with water for table purposes. In Korea water is generally drawn from wells on the compounds or private enclosures, and not from the public wells on the street. But even this precaution is not considered enough, and water is boiled and filtered. Such precautions are generally sufficient, and it is very seldom that in Japan or Korea a foreigner dies of that scourge. The great mortality in Korea from this source is due almost entirely to the fact, already noted, that the public wells are often close by the open sewers of the cities, and the germs of the disease infiltrate through the soil into the water. In Japan there is already great attention paid to sanitation, so that there the plague is less deadly.

Digitized by Google

As to travel in Korea, there are three methods: by sedan chair (the usual method), on horseback or pony-back and on foot. Of course there are no public conveyances. In Japan the kurimas or jin-rickshaws are a public convenience. There is nothing in Korea to take their place. Each foreigner keeps his chair, and often hires the bearers by the month. In the city and immediate vicinity no relay is needed, but on longer journeys, as from the capital to the port, a relief goes along, and they change every mile or two. These chairs are comfortable, being arranged so that one sits down as in an arm-chair, all being nicely upholstered, with windows at the sides and behind, which can be opened to admit the air in summer and closed so as to keep out the cold in winter. These chairs, about three and a half feet square and four and three-fourths feet high, are raised by two shafts run through large staples at the sides, brought together at the back by two cross-pieces, and these again crossed by other pieces running the same way as the shafts. These latter pieces rest on the shoulders of the bearers, two of whom, the second and third, are inside the shafts, while the others are outside. When all is in readiness the word is given, the chair is raised so that the bottom swings nearly a foot from the ground, and off go the bearers at a good round pace of nearly five miles an hour. The motion of these chairs with experienced bearers is very agreeable, and one can read or go to sleep without any sense of discomfort ex-

Digitized by Google



Sedan Chair and Attendants. Page 281.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

cept during a very long ride, when the constrained position becomes a little tiresome.

To those who are fond of walking the vicinity of the capital offers many inducements for a stroll. One can go in many different directions and find sights to charm the eye. Spectacles curious and interesting meet the gaze at almost every turn and at all seasons. What has been said of walking applies equally well to horseback exercise.

There is one drawback to the outing of ladies within the city limits, at least on foot, and that is the curiosity of the people. Unaccustomed as people there are to seeing women on the streets, the sight of our ladies riding or walking without the pretence of keeping their faces hidden from the gaze is a novel one. The people seem unable to see often enough these peculiar creatures, and, if allowed, will follow for blocks a company going out shopping or for a walk. It often requires the authority of a soldier to keep the crowds from pressing too close.

Doubtless upon the ladies presses most heavily the ennui of Eastern life. Even in Japan there are greater possibilities of amusement. Concert troupes pass through the country, and some enjoyment is to be gained in that way. Then there are larger colonies of foreigners and greater diversity of occupation. Still, even in Korea there are enjoyments which do much to make time pass lightly. The foreign colony in the capital is of just

Digitized by Google

such size as to make intercourse easy and familiar and without constraint. Numbering about fifty, exclusive of Japanese, there is a unity of feeling and a community of interests among the foreigners in the capital which contributes very largely to the delightfulness of life there. Each season has its amusements, and in a round of social pleasure the years pass away for the most part comfortably indeed. Of course the ladies generally find their household duties occupying their mornings. During the spring and autumn, and also often in summer and winter, very pleasant recreation is found in horseback rides to various points. As already mentioned, there are many charming bits of scenery, and many roads where a little mountain climbing varies the monotony and deepens the breathing. Often picnics are made up to visit this spot and that. Occasionally a picnic party decides to go some three miles away to the river, and then, crossing in the native boats, the rendezvous is found on the high bluffs on the opposite side. Visits are sometimes made to the fortress of Puk Hon, some fifteen to eighteen miles north of the capital, where most exquisite scenery, varied and wild, meets the eye and charms the senses. In every direction in which one turns some objects of interest are found. In their seasons various flowers make the hills and meadows bright and odorous. White violets, softly fragrant, tempt the lover of that flower down to revel in banks

Digitized by Google

of perfume. The hills are in the spring covered with oleander, and parties come home and make their dwellings bright with magenta and white bloom.

Another popular amusement is tennis. Many of the compounds have excellent tennis-courts, and the ladies acting as hostesses invite as guests their friends to join and make the afternoon enjoyable. As business ceases at from four to five, and some are able to get away much earlier, the afternoons pass without much monotony. Generally there is such a spirit of friendly rivalry between pairs and teams that to the mere sport of the game there is added the spice of a real contest for supremacy. Such weather for tennis as the weeks from September 1st to about December 1st afford can surely be found nowhere else. Then the temperature has cooled down from the midsummer heat of August to a comfortable degree, and as the thermometer gradually drops hard play increases, while seldom are the grounds unfit for play by reason of storms. One season the writer played tennis from March 15th till December 16th, when the ground froze and the racquet was laid away. Of course, during the summer the play did not commence till after six, when the heat of the sun had diminished.

Besides these out-door exercises, amusements and divertisements intellectual occupy the mind during the evenings. Dinner-parties are a pretext to gather the people at some one of the homes. There readings, cha-

Digitized by Google

rades, musical selections vocal and instrumental, story-telling, chess, dominoes and the varied resources of cultured people are drawn upon for the common interest and pleasure. Musicians and singers of practice and skill are numbered among the foreigners there. Occasionally the Mikado's empire is drawn upon for the entertainment of the guests, and Japanese tricks of leger-demain and illusion mystify those gathered. For those gentlemen who like to hunt there is game for the shot-gun and the rifle. I have spent many a day out with my gun after wild pigeons, ducks, swans, geese and wild pheasants, seldom returning with empty game-bag. The hunter there is never harassed, after leaving the city, by being warned off an inviting piece of woodland by the repellant "Trespassers will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law." He may go almost where he will and yet not trespass. Should he desire deer, he may take a five days' trip from the capital, with more than an even chance of bringing back a haunch of venison. Should larger game be his object, a few days' journey will bring him to the haunts of the leopard and the royal tiger. In fact, during my residence in Seoul a leopard was shot within a third of a mile of our house, and one was seen several times within a hundred yards of the same. This animal was driven into one of the old palace enclosures by the deep snows of the winter. Doubtless he hoped to make a few meals on the innumerable dogs to be found within the city limits. Several varieties

Digitized by Google

of duck abound in the autumn, and wild geese settle by thousands not five miles from the city. Swans have a feeding-place less than four miles from the city, and a visit to this has resulted several times in my bringing back two fine fellows, brought down with my Winchester at distances of from one hundred and fifty to three hundred yards. One of my experiences may not be without interest to the reader: I was out after duck one day, when I saw a couple fly and alight some half a mile down the river. I followed them, keeping behind a huge pile of stones thrown up to form a pier at time of high water. There I found a number of Koreans, who called to me to hurry and shoot the duck. Just as I peeped around the corner the two I had seen rose and flew; yet one was left, which dived, but came up very speedily. His peculiar antics and a strange way of acting mystified me, but, fearing lest he should get away, I fired and killed him. The current was very swift, and I shouted to the Koreans to get into a boat and bring him to shore. I was surprised to find that they did not do so, especially as I promised some cash to the one who should fetch him. What astonished me more was to see the duck which I thought I had killed suddenly put *his head* under water and make for the shore in a very peculiar manner. The Koreans were around the corner where I could not see them, so I ran around to spur them up, fearing lest I should yet lose my bird. When I reached them, what was my sur-

Digitized by Google

prise to see the dead bird nearly at the shore, being pulled in with a line fast to a hook in its throat, and the men and boys laughing themselves red in the face over the joke they had played on the "Tai In" ("great man"—I think I have mentioned that that is the title they apply to foreigners). I joined in the laugh at my expense, and waited for an explanation. They had been fishing for duck, and had taken this one; but the line was weak, and so they had feared to pull, since the duck was a large one; consequently they had welcomed me to help them in the matter. After they had laughed somewhat immoderately, as I thought, they took the hook out and laid the duck on the ground. I motioned to the man who accompanied me to pick it up and put it in the bag. This put another face on the matter, and the one who had caught the bird sobered immediately, and claimed the bird as his because his hook had caught it and his line had pulled it in. I then claimed it, on the ground that he couldn't take it though he had caught it, and that my shot had killed it. The bystanders laughed again at this turn of the argument, and the fisherman scratched his head for a reply. After parleying a little while, and teasing the fellow till I thought I had evened matters, I proposed a compromise, suggesting that the bird was half his and half mine. To this he eagerly agreed, and then I bought his half for a sum equivalent to about ten cents—all that he asked for it.

Digitized by Google

It will thus be seen that there is no dearth of sport, pleasure and pastime, manly and vigorous or gentle and, if you please, genteel, in the hermit kingdom. To one who is disposed to make the most of his opportunities the little corner of the globe called Korea is by no means the most uncomfortable place to choose for a home.

Perhaps the most trying time for foreigners is during the rainy season, beginning from about July 1st to 15th, and continuing about six weeks. The downpour is not continuous, but it comes in very heavy showers, sometimes in a steady rain for a day; then there may be a day or two of sunshine, but the ground is never dry and the houses get thoroughly dampened. At such times it is necessary to light fires in the kangs and dry the rooms out. Clothing has to be dried by artificial heat, for the atmosphere is thoroughly humid and the dampness penetrates every corner of the house. The temperature never rises above 95° in the shade, seldom over 90°, and the nights nearly always permit sleep. But the heat is steady, and with the humidity so high as it generally is this season is peculiarly trying. Fortunately, this period is not a long one, and in the magnificent autumn which follows one soon forgets the discomfort of the few midsummer weeks. Reminders of the dampness of those weeks remain, however, in the shape of spotted gloves, unless one has taken the precaution to enclose them in air-tight cans and to dry

Digitized by Google

them thoroughly several times during the wet season. This precaution prevents trouble.

The principle of extra-territoriality is applied to foreigners. None but Koreans are subject to Korean law, and even those who are in the employ of foreigners can be arrested only through the respective consulates of their employers. Foreigners are subject only to the consuls representing their own countries. The extension of the principle to employes of foreigners is to prevent the latter from being placed in straits through pressure applied by means of the servants. This same principle of extra-territoriality is usual in the East. The forms of justice in those countries are so different from our own, and the punishments so at variance with what we deem right, that naturally we do not care to submit to the punitive decisions and regulations in vogue there. But, while foreigners are not subject to the native laws, they yet have influence in securing mitigation of punishments or release of prisoners held under the operation of those laws. In several cases which came under our observation the missionaries secured the release of men who had been imprisoned on grounds which to the missionaries seemed unjust. I was, as related elsewhere, appealed to in a case of this kind by a man whose wife had been seized by a rural mandarin. But while foreigners are able to wield a corrective or restraining agency in this way, it needs a careful discrimination to use that influence. Korean of-

Digitized by Google

ficials, like all Eastern magnates, are jealous of their prerogatives, and unwise interference would soon have the effect not only of weakening the influence of foreigners, but would arouse resentment and pave the way for a restriction of the privileges now enjoyed by residents in the country.

A novelty to Occidentals who are in the employ of the government is the presents which come to them from the palace at certain times of the year. On the occasion of the birthdays of the king, queen, crown prince and other immediate connections of the royal family the king orders the president of the home office, whose office corresponds somewhat to that of our secretary of the interior, to send presents to those foreigners who are connected with the government. These presents differ somewhat according to the time of year. At one time we received a present of about fifty pounds of beef, six large fish weighing from ten to twenty pounds each, four hundred eggs, done up in straw strings containing ten in a string (we used to have our jokes about buying eggs by the yard), half a dozen live chickens, about half a bushel of large chestnuts and the same quantity of English walnuts. In the time of persimmons three or four hundred of that luscious fruit would be sent in place of some other articles. Sometimes a dozen pheasants would appear. In the summer from forty to eighty fans of various patterns found their way to our door. To the bearers of these we were expected

Digitized by Google

to present a gratuity of about a dollar or a dollar and a half. It generally happened that the fish were unmistakably and odoriferously dead, and the beef was not seldom in the same condition. But, fortunately, Koreans like meat and fish "gamey," and so all supplies of this kind came in well for the servants. The attendants of the foreigners in native employ were always jubilant when these presents arrived, for they meant a feast of good things, if not "wine on the lees," to them. No matter how strong the smell, the food was acceptable to Koreans, and was received with joy and eaten with gusto.

In return for such presents the foreigners are expected to give thanks and good wishes for the donor to the president of the home office. The sending of these presents is another good omen for the continuance of the pleasant relations at present existing between the government and the foreigners in its employ, as well as a proof that Koreans estimate very highly the service the foreigners are rendering.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XV.

MISSIONARY WORK.

THIS little book should not be closed without a word on missions. Other works on Korea were for the most part written prior to the occupation of that country as a mission field, or were the productions of men who had no special interest in the work of spreading the gospel. The missionaries and others who from occupation or from love for the Master have felt an interest in the religious welfare of the Korean nation have written, now and again, to periodicals such as *The Independent* of New York, giving isolated facts or the bearing of certain occurrences on the work of missions, or the yearly summaries of things accomplished. But the situation of missionaries, the disposition of the government and of the people toward Christianity, the receptivity of the population, the obstacles and limitations of missionary enterprise, have not been set forth in their correlations. And yet there is a very general interest among Americans concerning these matters. Wherever the writer has preached, and has mentioned that he has been in Korea, the request has come, "Tell us about the work there." Eager inquiry and pointed questioning

Digitized by Google

have demonstrated that people want to know the status of Christianity in the hermit peninsula. The dramatic circumstances under cover of which Dr. Allen, by cautious and judicious action, aided by his medical knowledge and practice, secured an entrance and a sure footing for Christian work at the capital have heightened the feeling of interest. Those acquainted with the circumstances have remarked upon the providence of Dr. Allen's presence at the banquet when Min Yong Ik staggered in, bleeding from wounds inflicted by a would-be assassin. Nor has the dramatic element been entirely absent in the subsequent dealings of missionaries with Koreans. But thanks are due to Him who holds the sceptre of the nations that the curtain has not gone down in any act upon a tragedy. While more than once during the last few years trouble has seemed imminent, and at one time a persecution of Christians might easily have been precipitated, no unseemly act has been committed, and no Protestant convert, so far as known, has suffered for renouncing the faith of his fathers.

The beginning of Protestant evangelization of Korea is due to the efforts of the Rev. John Ross of Moukden, China. Korea borders Manchuria on the north-west. Formerly there was a neutral strip between the two countries, on which no one was allowed to settle, but this strip has gradually been occupied even to the wall of stakes. There was supposed to be no communication

Digitized by Google

between the two countries, but because of the gradual settlement of that neutral strip communication has become more frequent. Besides this, the embassies bearing the tribute of the king of Korea to China were pretexts for more than the mere embassy to pass to Pekin, and so it happened that copies of the Scriptures in Chinese passed by way of Pekin into Korea. It came about in this way that Koreans of the North heard of the Christian religion, and inquiries were made for an evangelist to explain what had been read. Mr. Ross studied the Korean dialect, and a translation of the New Testament was made into Korean, which was provisional, but served its purpose very well. Visits were made by Koreans into China especially to learn about this religion, and thus a beginning was made in the conversion of a few in the North, who themselves became evangelists and carried the news further. This opening was sought by Mr. Ross himself. In 1873 he visited the frontier town to secure a teacher. Later he succeeded in this. His work showed itself in the translation of the New Testament with the aid of his colleague, Mr. MacIntyre. A Korean was found who could set type, and he was employed to do this. Mr. Ross was surprised and delighted to find that over the types this man had imbibed the truths of Christianity and had become a follower of the Master. Soon his place was supplied by another, more apt in typesetting, while the former printer was instructed

Digitized by Google

and became a colporteur, carrying the Gospel of St. Luke in the vernacular. Mr. Ross found means of sending out colporteurs, and soon came the news that a minister was wanted to baptize the converts. Mr. Ross was soon able to travel in the country himself, and found that Protestant Christianity had gained a foothold.

This was prior to the actual occupation of the country as a missionary field, which took place in 1884, when Dr. Allen was ordered from China to the capital by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America. It should be premised here that every one of the ministers from the United States to the court of Korea has construed the treaty between the two countries to mean that the work of teaching and preaching Christianity is not allowed. It provides that men may live in the capital for the purpose of studying the language, and it is under cover of this provision that missionaries are now resident in the country.

Dr. Allen was not known at first as a missionary. He went ostensibly to practice his profession as a physician. Even to General Foote, at that time minister resident from the United States, his standing as a missionary was at first unknown. He was appointed physician to the American legation, a position which gave him standing before the Korean government. The unfortunate emeute of 1884, and the attack upon Min

Digitized by Google

Yong Ik, next to the king the most prominent person in the kingdom, by giving Dr. Allen an opportunity to display the skill of Western medical science, opened the way for more direct mission work. His success in bringing Min Yong Ik through his illness led to his being asked to prescribe for the king and other members of the royal family. Success attended him here. He was consulted in other matters, and his conservatism and the common sense of his advice gained for him the entire confidence of the king, so that when the latter sent an embassy to the United States, Dr. Allen was made foreign secretary, and thus became the escort of the embassy.

In a conversation with the king, some time after the emeute, the work of the hospitals in the Western lands was brought to his attention, and the description the doctor gave of their operation and benefits interested the king so much that he suggested, or acted upon the suggestion of Dr. Allen, that one be established in the capital. This was warmly welcomed by Dr. Allen, and buildings were set apart for the purpose, a certain sum was devoted to its maintenance and Dr. Allen became the head of it, while mandarins were detailed to look after its management and servants were appointed for doing the necessary work. Dr. Allen, by his shrewdness and conservatism, had thus opened the way for the working of missionaries in a land which a little over two years before had been sealed against them.

Digitized by Google

The field thus early occupied by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church soon showed the need for more workers, and the next year Dr. John Heron, a physician of great promise and devoted attachment to the cause of Christ, along with his bride, was detailed to assist Dr. Allen in the work of medical missions at the capital, and in the same year the Rev. Horace G. Underwood was sent out as a clerical aid. These two men threw themselves into the labor with great zeal and much discretion. Dr. Heron immediately took up the work at the hospital, and soon became renowned among the natives for the marvels of healing he effected. His surgical knowledge and success in such operations as the removal of cataracts increased the reputation for cleverness which foreigners already had, and made more honorable the position of such foreigners as should afterward come.

Mr. Underwood while in Japan had been under the tuition of some Korean scholars whom he met there, and he made such rapid progress in the acquirement of the language as very soon to attract the attention of the king, who offered him the position of court interpreter. But Mr. Underwood had gone out to do missionary work, and while his opportunities for gaining influence at the palace might have been enlarged, such a position would have in great measure precluded participation in active missionary enterprise, so he declined the proffered position. At the hospital a school had been started with

Digitized by Google

the object of giving some Koreans a medical education. They were to be instructed in English, and Mr. Underwood was soon at work giving young men instruction in that language. It was not long afterward that this gentleman commenced a course of instruction in physics *in the vernacular*, which serves to show the command he had so quickly gained over the Korean language. But Mr. Underwood's efforts were not confined to this department of labor. The needs of some boys with whom he had come into contact suggested to him the establishing of an orphanage, and he mentioned this to some Koreans of high rank, through whom knowledge of the project came to the king, and the latter gave it his sanction. The suggestion was approved of by the Board of Missions at home, and the orphanage became a fact. At first, owing to the absence of female missionaries to whom work among girls could be committed, the only inmates admitted were boys, and before long there were over forty of these who were lodged, boarded and taught in the institution. The studies included, first, the vernacular, under a competent native scholar; second, the Chinese written language, also under a native instructor, for the aim is to turn out scholars who will in native lore be the peers of any in the kingdom; third, the English language, and with this, as the scholars grow old enough to profit by it, instruction is to be given in science; fourth, moral and religious instruction is given, with Chris-

Digitized by Google

tianity as its basis. Only those who have entered into the work of instruction, and those who know how keen among the men in power is the desire for educated Koreans to enter the government service, will be able to appreciate the hold upon the kingdom of Korea the establishment of this orphanage has given to Christians. When, on the one side, it is stated that the king knows of the progress made by scholars in the school, that he is watching in advance the steps they are making, that he has already signified his desire that the oldest and most advanced scholars, two in number, shall enter his service; and when, on the other side, it is realized that in all probability there will go from that orphanage young men who will be the peers, in Korean and Chinese learning, of any they will meet, and in addition to this will have a fair knowledge of Western science, will have habits of order and instincts of civilization above the average of their race, and, more than all, minds steeped in the love of their Saviour,—it can be seen that no work is carried on in Seoul which gives promise of larger results to Christianity than that done at the orphanage.

In 1886, the year in which the "American teachers" went out to establish a royal school under a contract with the government, the Presbyterian Board sent out Miss Dr. Annie Ellers to act as the queen's physician and to do duty in the woman's department of the hospital. She was relieved, a year and a half later, by Miss Dr. Lillian

Digitized by Google

Horton, a skilled and talented physician, to whom the needs of Korea as a missionary field had appealed with great force. Miss Ellers, who meantime had become the wife of the Rev. D. A. Bunker, one of the "American teachers," and consequently had been relieved of her work at the palace and hospital, notwithstanding that she had severed her connection with the mission, commenced the work of forming a girls' school in connection with the orphanage. She has since been compelled by ill health to give up this gratuitous mission work, but, fortunately, the Presbyterian Board has now on the field ladies who can devote their energies to this work and to efforts among the women of the capital.

It will be seen from the foregoing that through both Mr. Ross and Dr. Allen the Presbyterians had been the first to enter the field. Through Dr. Allen's prestige at the court, maintained so well by Dr. Heron after the former's appointment on the embassy, a sort of quasi-recognition of the work of the missionaries, at least so far as eleemosynary work was concerned, had been gained from the government. Work had been begun under the most favorable auspices. But the Presbyterians had not very much the start of the next to enter the field, the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America. Early in 1885, Dr. Scranton, a physician of undoubted skill, accompanied by his wife, Dr. Scranton's mother, Mrs. M. F. Scranton, a most devoted lady, who brought to

Digitized by Google

the field not only a determination to work for the women of Korea, but also means of her own to aid her in her efforts, and the Rev. H. G. Appenzeller and wife, were on their way to open work under direction of Methodist Episcopal Church missionary societies. One of Dr. Scranton's first cares was the establishment of a private hospital—private in the sense that it was not under government supervision—and soon he was hard at work healing the diseases of many who came to seek relief at his hands. Meanwhile, Mr. Appenzeller had opened a school where he daily gave lessons in English, not neglecting the weighty matter of giving religious instruction. Mrs. Scranton built a large house in native style, and in a short time she had around her a class of interesting girls, whom it is her care to train up as Christian women. It should be said here that it is not the purpose of these girls' schools to train the inmates in such a way as to unfit them for their station in their own society. The aim is to develop them in such ways as to make them model housewives under the conditions in which they must pass their lives, and to make them missionaries of the Cross among their relatives and associates. These pioneers were cheered, as the years went by, by the coming of other helpers sent by the home boards. For several years these were the only Protestant denominations represented. But within the last two years the Canadian Presbyterian Church has sent out a helper

Digitized by Google

who was most gratefully received and cordially welcomed by those on the ground, and the South Australian colonies have also sent valuable men, who are co-operating with the Presbyterian mission already established. Within a year the English Church has opened a mission, and is now represented by a missionary bishop and other helpers. Of what they have done we shall speak later.

We must now consider under what limitations the missionaries may work. This is a difficult subject, and it must be allowed that there is no agreement on this point, even among the men on the field. The position of the government and the governing class is peculiar. There is no open government sanction for proselyting, that is, for the active work of evangelization. The treaty with the American government does not permit it, nor do the treaties with other nations. This, as already stated, is the consensus of opinion of all the representatives of the United States government in Korea. Furthermore, the government has on one or two occasions sent communications to the minister resident of the United States, asking him to cause the cessation of efforts at evangelizing then in progress under the missionaries from America. But there must be placed alongside of this the fact that the king has undoubtedly known all along what was the purpose of missionaries in coming, and that they were carrying out that purpose. We must also take cognizance of the fact

Digitized by Google

that the protests made to the United States minister were made at times of political excitement, when such evangelistic efforts were fraught with peril to missionaries and to converts, and might have contributed to a revolt against the government. The truth is, therefore, that the government has winked at the prosecution of the missionaries' labors. No open preaching is permitted. Even teaching is prohibited. Therefore the missionaries do not carry on aggressive warfare in the sense of approaching people with a view to converting them. Evangelistic work is done, first, by means of the distribution and sale of books—the Bible in Chinese, the Gospel of Mark as revised by the missionaries in Seoul, and such tracts and translations as are from time to time prepared; secondly, by conversation with such as come to the missionaries for instruction; and thirdly, through native converts who act as colporteurs and "local preachers," spreading the good news among their intimates and bringing the knowledge of the Saviour to their acquaintances. Of course all this is in contravention of the letter of the law. The missionaries have therefore to face this problem of the observance of the letter of the law, which means complete quiescence so far as active evangelization is concerned, or of acting contrary to the law of the land and the construction placed on the treaty by our ministers to the court of Korea. It is a hard position in which to be placed.

Digitized by Google

Men are coming to the missionaries asking to be taught about Jesus. People who have read the Bible and have been led to believe its truths beg to be catechized, and if found ready they desire to be baptized. And all this is not in consequence of personal solicitation on the part of the propagators of Christianity, but because of their own insight into their needs and their conviction that satisfaction has been made for them by Christ. Shall the missionaries refuse to teach these "seekers after God," who come with pleading faces and anxious hearts to get ease for awakened consciences? shall they turn them away unsatisfied? The missionaries say, "No. We will avoid all ostentatious display. We will not invite the public to witness the confession of believers. No daring challenge shall be flouted in the face of the authorities. They know of our work. They wink at it in all times of quiet. They are willing to employ men who are known to be Christian ministers to teach in their schools, and missionaries to serve in their hospitals. And we believe that the present rulers are not much concerned at the proselyting of Koreans to the Christian faith."

The missionaries have good grounds for this reasoning. Part of these grounds we have already given; a part is still to be mentioned. Reference has been made to the school and hospital of the Methodist Episcopal mission. It should be stated here that institutions which have the sanction of the government are al-

Digitized by Google

lowed to place over their entrances large boards bearing a title in Chinese, which title applies to the institution. It is known that in Mr. Appenzeller's school more or less of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity are taught, yet by governmental sanction titles were placed over the entrance of the school as well as over the door of the hospital. That the situation may be more definitely understood, it must still further be remembered that the attitude of the government toward Christianity differs from that of Japan. In Japan the government is entirely indifferent. It has withdrawn support alike from Buddhist and Shinto temples. It pays no subsidies for the maintenance of a national religion. It goes further, and utilizes Christian missionaries as educators by requiring them to teach in the schools a certain number of hours in return for the privilege of living outside the treaty ports. It even grants permission to these missionary teachers to use as text-books works distinctively Christian. Its attitude is, "So you teach, we don't care even if you teach Christianity and make converts." No such opportunity as this is given in Korea. The Christian religion is nominally under the ban, but, practically, missionaries may do religious work as long as the attention of the government is not directed to their operations or political complications do not arise to compel a protest.

What, then, has been the result of direct missionary labor at the capital and in the provinces? Efforts have

Digitized by Google

so far been directed almost solely to Seoul and along the line of the great highway to China from the capital. Not much has been done south of the capital, except that one man was for a short time at Fusan. (The English bishop has also opened a station there.) Owing to Mr. Ross's efforts much has been done to pave the way in the North. Much preliminary work had been accomplished. The gospel was not entirely a novelty. Seed had been sown, and all that was needed was watering and cultivation, so attention was given to this part of the kingdom first, especially since the force was so small that concentration and not diffusion of energy was a necessity. In July, 1886, the writer was present at the baptism of the first convert to Christianity resulting from the work of the missionaries at the capital. The baptism took place in the house of one of the missionaries. No other Koreans were present. Care was taken lest any of the servants or native callers should intrude upon the service, and thus endanger the secrecy of the administration. No one knew what might be the result to the convert or to the mission should knowledge of the baptism of this person reach the government. All present realized the danger, and the ceremony was a very solemn one. For weeks, when an official called on the missionary, complaint of the deed was anticipated and dreaded. But time passed on with no serious consequences to the convert and no reproach of the missionaries. Other

Digitized by Google

converts were found and were baptized. Reasonable care was always taken that the assemblies should not be broken in upon by chance visits of officials or others who are fond of calling on foreigners.

By and by the workers grew bolder. Mr. Underwood translated into Korean in the same meters such hymns as "Nearer, my God, to thee," and taught the foreign airs to the Koreans, and soon the meetings of Koreans for Bible instruction, for prayer and conference were marked by lusty singing which could be heard from the street.

The speedy development of the seed which had been sown was very encouraging to the workers there. They remembered that in Japan it cost twelve years of weary toiling before the first-fruits of the now abundant harvest were reached. That less than two years of labor should develop in this way, even the great faith of the missionaries had not anticipated. Progress from this point on was rapid. In two years more from that time the author baptized two men, who were the sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth converts in the Presbyterian Church, while between Seoul and the northern boundary a hundred others were waiting to be catechized and baptized!

From what has been written by tourists, and even by residents in the East, it has been inferred that the so-called converts are not sincere—that there is some ulterior motive for their "pretended" acceptance of Christianity. Especially from China has the statement come

Digitized by Google



Scene in Old Palace Grounds. Page 307.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

that it is doubtful whether there is a single case of genuine conversion, and that in each instance the motive for professing Christianity could be found in the hope that the convert might be employed in a missionary's household or in that of some other foreigner, or else be engaged as a colporteur. In other words, according to these cavilers Chinese converts are hypocritical and purely mercenary. As to the Chinese converts, the charges have been indignantly denied and apparently refuted by the missionaries in China. Doubtless the same charge will be made as to the converts in Korea. This one instance, therefore, may be cited in advance: In the summer of 1888 there was considerable excitement stirred up in the capital by injudicious action on the part of the Romish missionaries there. This smouldering discontent was fanned into a flame by the Chinese "resident" at Seoul. Incipient riots took place. The government requested, through the United States legation, that the teaching of Christianity should cease. At this time Mr. Underwood was in the North, having gone with the purpose of catechizing and baptizing such converts as should meet him. He was hastily summoned back by a messenger to the capital. When the message found him he was at a meeting where some twenty-two or twenty-three men were gathered for the purpose of confessing their faith in Christ. To them he told the news, adding that there was evidently some danger to be apprehended by those who should be found to be Chris-

Digitized by Google

tians. Only two of the company withdrew, the rest declaring that they would assume the risk, even though it were of death. If we remember that only a few years before there had been a persecution of the Romanist converts, when it was estimated that over twenty thousand perished, we see that the danger of being a Christian was not without foundation. In fact, each convert takes his life in his hands when he confesses to being a Christian. The character of the converts can be gathered from the foregoing statement.

Mercenary motives cannot be ascribed. Thus far, among members of the Presbyterian Church only one has been disciplined or reproved for displaying motives at variance with those of a sincere Christian. The character of the converts has been good. Even among their own people the effect of their life has been noted, and magistrates have remarked on the salutary effect of the teachings of Jesus on the life of his followers. At least two, most likely more, native churches have been organized in the Presbyterian communion. Of course much has been done among the Methodists, and they have their organizations. The result is that Protestant Christianity is on its feet in the peninsula. A grand and promising beginning has been made, and most speedy returns are looked for by the workers. In 1888 the increase was five-fold.

A question that doubtless occurs to the reader is as to the personal hazard of converts. Only a provisional

Digitized by Google

answer can be returned to that. While the missionaries, as foreigners, are not subject to the Korean government, and in case of offence are tried by their consuls, native converts are subject to the laws of the Korean government. A persecution under those laws is at no time an impossibility. So long as Confucianism is the State religion, and the tenets of that religion are a legal obligation on the people, the door is open for the approach of a trial of faith by fire and sword. Were such to occur, the missionaries and other foreigners could wield no legal weapon to stop it. While they have in isolated cases so brought influence to bear on officials as to release from prison and punishment persons charged with misdemeanors, the nature of the causes giving rise to a religious oppression would prevent any effective interference to avert it. In anything which concerns the conduct of internal affairs Koreans would brook no interference. Extra-territoriality ensures the safety of the missionaries, but adds nothing to the security of the converts. We can judge of the possibility of persecutions in the future only by noting the causes of their occurrence in the past. Romanists have been in the country for over a hundred years. During that time they have had to sustain several severe trials. The last one, as late as 1868, is estimated to have cost the death of nearly twenty-five thousand converts. The machinery which wrought such destruction is still in existence. The only question, then, is as to the occasion to put

Digitized by Google

it into action or the disposition to use it. From the facts given above, as to the feeling of the government toward Christianity, it can be seen that there is no disposition among the authorities to precipitate a massacre of Christians or a suppression of Christianity. While officials and the government know of proselyting, and may even be informed of individual cases of conversion, only in one or two cases has official notice been taken of the work of the missionaries. This was when the ill-advised action of the Romanists caused a hard feeling among the courtiers and in the palace, in 1888. Then a request was sent to the American minister that, in accordance with the treaty, there should be no teaching of Christianity. Our minister felt constrained to comply with the request, and sent a note to the American missionaries, informing them of the request and intimating that non-compliance with the terms of the treaty would forfeit the protection of the American flag. This was what was called "the check" in Korea. Some of the missionaries considered it wisest to heed the warning, and, while not absolutely stopping work, let their teaching be more quiet, their work less ostentatious. But the excitement passed away, and before long the missionaries were greeting each other in the street and laughing about "the check" as they interchanged the news of increase in the number of converts. They wrote to the papers at home deprecating the statement that there had been any stoppage in the work. There

Digitized by Google

were, however, those who, apart from the field, and not prejudiced by a too close and narrow vision, saw that "the check" was an intimation of what might easily occur. They realized that with level-headed men working cautiously, laying stress on the healing art and on educational advantages practiced and given by Christians, Christianity could under cover of these be making real advance even in the work of evangelization. The more thoughtful among the missionaries believed that no challenge should be shaken in the face of the government, and that, so far as possible, official attention should be directed away from their operations. In fact, the government is very much in the position of the municipal policeman on the Fourth of July: a pack of fire-crackers may be fizzing around the corner, and the course of his beat will take him in another direction; but if a hardy urchin explodes a fire-cracker under the policeman's nose, the latter's duty requires the arrest of the foolhardy boy. So, as Christianity seems to have wrought no harm in the kingdom, as Protestant missionaries have wrought only beneficent deeds, as they work quietly and even minister to the needs of the government in turning out scholars fitted to perform important duties, these missionaries have been unmolested. Even officials have commended the Christianity that produces kindly deeds and a bettered life. But a single injudicious action, or even one to which that adjective could not be applied, in a time of

Digitized by Google

political excitement or popular foment might precipitate a conflict which could result only in the extermination of Christianity.

The conclusion therefore, is that it is not a safe thing for a man to become a Christian in Korea. Danger does exist, but under ordinary conditions the peril is not a very lively one. Conservative action and unostentatious endeavor are the desiderata of the situation, and the longer such a line of action is persevered in and the greater the lapse of time since the last persecution, the more secure are the converts and the less is the imminence of an outbreak against them. This may be illustrated by the action of the officials connected with our school. It had unwisely been announced to the king that the teachers nominated by the American government were clergymen. Naturally, the officials were very suspicious, and it was perhaps anticipated that we would endeavor to use our vantage-ground in favor of the Christian religion. The consequence was that for over three months at least one official—a president or secretary of the board of education—was always in the school. We had, however, gauged the situation. The conclusion had been reached that if our school was to be a factor in the evangelization of the kingdom, nothing must be done to antagonize the people at the outset. We were in the employ of the government. Our personal lives, not our tongues, must tell the tale of Christ. We must not frighten away those who

Digitized by Google

might be benefited, perhaps eventually led to the Saviour, by us. We were therefore exceedingly cautious. We allowed no expression condemnatory of the customs of the country, so far as they were honorable, to escape us. We preached and practiced the doctrine that work is no disgrace. We discarded in our text-books any references to Christianity as a special religion. The consequence was that soon after the first quarter was ended we were left alone with our scholars. A visit for a few minutes each day was the limit of supervision exercised. Soon even these visits were omitted, and finally official visits were a rarity and an honor. We soon found that a reference to Christ was not offensive to the scholars. The name of God ceased to cause any remark or expressive glances between the scholars, and more than once a discussion was broached and invited by the scholars as to the respective merits of Christianity and Confucianism. There is every reason to believe that like results will follow conservative action on the part of the missionaries. While their centuries of hermitage have made Koreans suspicious, they are susceptible to honorable treatment and appreciative of a kind regard for their prejudices.

One subject that has not been touched on in this chapter is the work among the women. It follows from what has been said concerning the social customs and the seclusion of the women that colporteurs and others do not have any opportunities of reaching them.

Digitized by Google

Because of the inaccessibility to male missionaries of the mothers and wives of Koreans lady workers are a necessity. It has already been shown that in Korea, as elsewhere, woman's influence is very great. If a fair beginning could be made among them, effects would be much enlarged. Romanists have gathered very large congregations of women. These have proved very zealous and very earnest workers. The seamstress in our own family, a Romanist convert, lost no opportunity of speaking to other servants of the blessings reaped by the followers of Jesus. Work confined to the men was limited in its scope. It could not effectively reach the children. Before they could come under the influence of Christianity their minds had become set in the ways of Confucianism.

The Methodists were keenly alive to this. Mrs. M. F. Scranton had determined to make that her specialty. She was aided by ladies sent on by women's auxiliary societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mrs. Dr. Scranton lent her aid as household duties permitted. Dr. Scranton was aided by a lady who took up the work for women in the hospital. For the Presbyterians Miss Ellers was sent out to act as physician to the queen and to take charge of the women's department of the hospital established by Dr. Heron. Mrs. Allen found her household cares so absorbing that no time was left for other work. Mrs. Heron made efforts to take a share in the labor, but found the task too exacting when

Digitized by Google

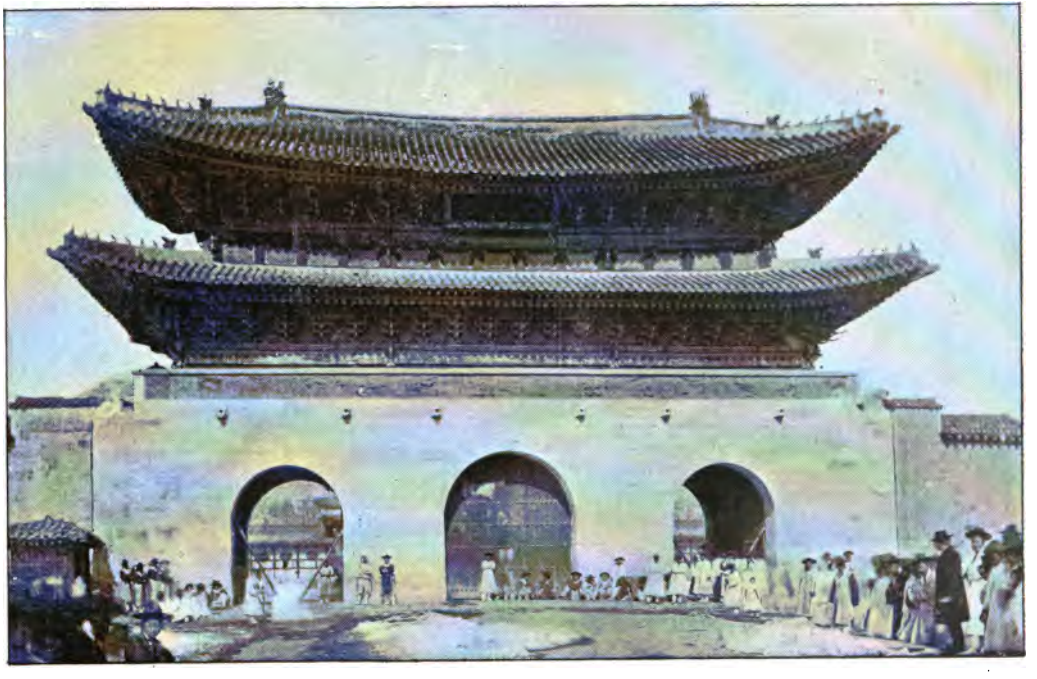
coupled with her household cares. Miss Dr. Horton came out as Miss Ellers' assistant. She found an appreciative aider in all work in Mr. Underwood, and they worked together so cheerfully and well that she soon changed her name for his. Of course the cares of their little son removed her after a while from participation in the activities of mission work, and now Miss Hayden is left with Mrs. Heron, who, since her husband's death, has decided to stay and work there, to bear the burden of the day. When this is written no adequate force is in the field. And yet to the women confined in their apartments, with only the narrowest views of life, the truths of the Christian religion, the blessings of appreciation and the hopes of happiness it offers appeal with marked force.

There is another and often overlooked factor in the evangelization of the heathen, which applies with especial force to Korea. The existence of this fact has been made a reproach to the cause of missions by those who wished the cause no good, and who spoke of the work only to carp at and decry it. This factor is the material benefits which follow in the train of Christianity. The poverty of the average Korean has already been spoken of. When a man is asked to become a Christian, he naturally asks what good it is going to do—in what respect Christianity is superior to Confucianism and Buddhism. It has been a very effective answer to point to the superior comforts which Christians enjoy,

Digitized by Google

to detail the advantages of a distinctively Christian civilization in reply to these questions. Koreans are fond of visiting the homes of foreigners. They admire the comforts—to them these comforts are highest of luxuries—of the home life of the strangers. They go home to ponder on the religion which takes hold of the present life of man and makes it more enjoyable. They mark our cheerful faces and our enjoyment of life, and wonder at the cause. They listen to the tales of the achievements of Western science. The huge cities, the wonderful railroad, the marvelous steamboat, impress them with a sense of the lifting power of our civilization. When they realize that all this is the outcome and development of our religion, the practical value of Christianity makes a powerful appeal to them. It is therefore no disgrace that our missionaries to China live sometimes in comfortable homes. The fact that they do so appeals to the Chinese as a reason for inquiring into the cause of their ability to do so. The case is the same in Korea, and the Presbyterian Board, taking into account the great advantage of this argument and the increased cost of living to foreigners in that country, has wisely raised the salaries of missionaries to that country. Thus the latter live in comparative comfort. Their incomes do not permit luxuries, but they prevent starving, and the effect is being realized in the willingness, nay eagerness, of Koreans in high position to visit and be on intimate terms with missionaries.

Digitized by Google



Main Entrance to Palace.

Page 316.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

One topic more requires mention here, and that is the need of the missions to Korea. The Presbyterian Church has now (since the death of Dr. Heron and the entrance of Dr. Allen upon new duties as secretary of the American legation at Seoul) eight missionaries on the field, of whom three ladies are married and consequently restricted somewhat in their opportunities of furthering the cause among the Koreans. Three are ordained, and are bending all their energies to the work before them. Mr. Underwood has prepared two books which will greatly lengthen the productive period of every missionary who goes to that country —a grammar or manual and a dictionary of the language. Besides this, he has worked actively in the translation of hymns, setting them to meters which admit singing the translations to the tunes to which they are sung in English; in the writing of tracts and summaries of Christian doctrine, and in the translation of the Shorter Catechism.

The Methodist Board of Foreign Missions is represented by missionaries, of whom two are physicians.

Since the death of Dr. Heron and the retirement of Dr. Allen from the work of the mission the medical department of the Presbyterian station at Seoul has had to languish. Mrs. Underwood has not been able alone to carry it on, and consequently there is at this very time a call for a man who is a capable physician and an earnest Christian to take up a labor which has been

Digitized by Google

developed by Drs. Allen and Heron. It is a field where there is no lack of congenial and cultivated companions, where life is exceptionally pleasant and where the devoted physician has innumerable opportunities to minister not only to bodies suffering from the ills humanity is heir to, but also to minds diseased and souls sickened with ignorance and guilt. It is a field where but few privations will be felt, and though earthly riches may not be laid up, an abundant and comfortable living is assured. It is to be hoped that the man or men needed will soon be pointed out and the needs of the station be filled. The Presbyterian Board is willing to send out clergymen to the station at Seoul, and is also desirous of extending the work there; but, like most societies of that character, it finds its opportunities limited by lack of funds. Were the means provided, the great needs of the station might easily be supplied. Those needs are, first, women to carry on work among the women. *This work cannot be delegated to the men.* The women now there have their hands full. What time is left after household duties are performed is not sufficient, is not a tithe of what is actually necessary to accomplish what daily offers itself to be done. "More *women* at the front!" is the ringing cry for Korea. Secondly, more men are required to go to the capital and to learn the language. The foregoing pages have attempted to show that the conditions are becoming more favorable yearly and the opportunities for work

Digitized by Google

larger and more abundant. Nor need it be feared that the men sent to learn the language, and so to be prepared to seize the opportunities as they come, will be idlers and non-producers while they are learning Korean. There is sufficient work to be done in the orphanage and other schools to employ their spare time and diversify their occupations, and to make the period of their study of the language productive in other ways. The need of all mission fields, "more workers," is an imperative necessity here. This is shown in the almost complete cessation of medical work, a most important factor in the labor, since the death of Dr. Heron. Had there been another physician at the station, hospital work need not have ceased when Dr. Heron was removed and Dr. Powers recalled. Were ill health or some other necessity to call away the senior missionary of the Presbyterian Board [he has since been called away], the other members would find their powers strained to the utmost to continue the work as now going on. There is, besides, this to be taken into account: none of the work among the Mongolian races has shown so large a return for the money and labor expended as that among the Koreans. That any opening which may present itself should have to be lost in so promising a country is a matter not only for profound sorrow, but even for shame. One other need the educational experience of the writer suggests: Much has been said of the orphanage and of the school at the hospital.

Digitized by Google

The gain to the missionary cause from these institutions has been duly set forth. In these schools there is a great need of educational equipment. Maps and charts for the study of geography and history, apparatus for the illustration of elementary physics and chemistry, a small telescope, an equipment of microscopes and similar apparatus—in short, the paraphernalia of laboratories—and a small observatory would not only add to the interest of the scholars and the definiteness and completeness of their learning, but would give new power to the organization which should employ them. It is the intention of the writer, should events lead him to return to Korea as a missionary, to make an earnest appeal to Christian educators and those who are interested in the cause not only of Christian missions but also of enlightenment, for such an equipment of these schools in apparatus as will largely increase their efficiency. It would be an investment which would pay large dividends. That the Master has a large harvest to be reaped in Cho Son is not only the hope but is also the sure conviction of the writer.

NOTE.—Since writing the foregoing an incident has transpired which modifies somewhat the conclusions reached. A Romish priest living in a village in the interior (which, according to treaty stipulations, was not legal, since residence of foreigners without passports is restricted to the ports and the capital) was driven out by the local mandarin because of some injudicious act on the part of the priest. The French *commissionaire*, knowing Korea's timid attitude, rudely demanded the priest's return, with an indemnity, and en-

Digitized by Google

deavored to have the mandarin punished (for doing his duty). The government felt its inability to cope with France, granted the former, but firmly refused the latter. The consequence is that under the "favored nation" clause our missionaries might claim residence where they choose in the interior. It is undoubtedly the case that if such settlements be made quietly and Christian work be done unostentatiously, practically *the whole country* can be reached by Christian teaching and influences. As yet, however, we have not workers enough to supply fully the treaty ports.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INDEX.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INDEX.

A.

Agriculture, 203; crudeness of methods in, 204, 213; products of, 209, *sqq.*; efforts to improve, 244.

Amusements, 158, *sqq.*; of foreigners, 281.

Army, instruction in the, 41.

Art, in embroidery, 156, 219; dearth of, in Korea, 215, 219.

Autonomy of Korea, 250, *sqq.*

B.

Bread-making, 151.

Brothers, rights of elder, 108.

Buddhism, not popular, 188.

Burial-places, 180, *sqq.*

C.

Capital, the, 44 *sqq.*; position and population, 44, 51; walls of, 44; and streets, 47; topography of, 48; and quietness, 53.

Children, in school, 159.

China, influence of, on Korean culture, 64, 108; conservatism of, 227; interference of, in Korea, 229, 239, 250, 252, 263.

Cholera in Korea, 210, 279.

Climate of Korea, 19.

Clothing, 92, 133, *sqq.*

Coal, abundance of, 40, 200.

Coins, current, 223, 241.

Confucianism, dominant in Korea, 187.

Cooking, 151.

Customs, peculiar, 131.

Customs service, 38.

D.

Dancing, 178.

Deaths, customs at, 182.

Denny, Judge O. N., on the independence of Korea, 251, 258.

Diet, 151, 209, 212.

Diplomatic ventures, 239.

Diseases, 93, 210, 279.

Dogs, numbers of, 55.

E.

Etiquette, of marriage, 102; of official intercourse, 114; of ordinary life, 115; of smoking, 117.

Examinations for government appointments, 64; the contestants, 67; severity of, 68; by proxy, 70.

Digitized by Google

F.

Fairs, description of, 128.
Fans, wide use of, 116.
Foot-ball, 163.
Foreigners, influence of, 87, 112, 113; life of, in Korea, 266, *sqq.*
Foulk, Lieutenant, quoted, 37, 129.
Fruits, varieties of, 205.
Fuel, 123, 200.

G.

Game, wild, in the peninsula, 284.
Games, 110, 158, *sqq.* See also *Amusements.*
Gold, existence of, in the peninsula, 202.
Government, the, of Korea, 22, *sqq.*; influenced by the people, 23; corruptions of, 27; incapacity of, 39; and distrust of foreigners, 201.
Guilds, organization of, 129.

H.

Hair, modes of dressing, 136.
Hats, description of, 139.
Heating arrangements, 121.
Home life, 96, *sqq.*
Honorifics, 58.
Houses, 50, 97; how built, 120.

I.

Ironing, 155.

J.

Japan, relations of, with Korea, 13, 15, 261, 263; attractions of, for tourists, 16, 17; religion in, 185; progress of, 226.
Jumping the rope, 164.

K.

Kidnaping of women, 29, 31.
Kim Ok Kiun, 73, 89.
King, the, of Korea, power of, 22; limited by custom, 24; outings of, 167, *sqq.*
Kites, 160.
Korea, not attractive to tourists, 16; physical features of, 18; climate of, 19; its government, 22, *sqq.*; instruction of army of, 41; languages of, 58, *sqq.*

L.

Languages, the, affinities of, 58, 62; difficulties of, to a foreigner, 59; influenced by the Chinese, 63.
Laundry, the, 153.

M.

Manufactures, scarcity of, 199; state of, at present, 215.
Marriage, how arranged, 99; etiquette of, 102; happiness resulting from, 105.
Medicines, 93, 94.
Military development and instruction, 39, 235.
Minerals, occurrence of, 200, *sqq.*
Mint, the new, 39.
Min Yong Ik, head of embassy, 228; attack upon, 241.

Digitized by Google

Missionaries, excellence of, 248.
Missionary work, obstacles to, 198; beginnings of, 292, *sqq.*; enterprises of, 295, *sqq.*; limitations of, 301, 308; and success, 305, 308; among women, 315; needs of, 317; prospects of, 320.
Monks, Buddhist, 191.
Mourning, garb of, 147.
Music, 177.

N.

Navigation of coasts, dangerous, 19.
New Year's customs, 195.

O.

Officials, grades of, 25; and corruption, 27; connivance at crime, 30; abuse of powers, 33; nepotism among, 33; bribery among, 35; etiquette among, 115; court dress of, 146.
Old age, regard for, 107.
Opium, little used, 91.

P.

Palaces, 49.
People, the, of Korea, influence of, on government, 23; reasons of indolence of, 32; orderly character of, 51; literary ability, 73; physique, 75; their appreciation of humor, 80, 158; kindness of, 11, 81; credulity of, 82; excitability of, 84; curiosity of, 86, 167; poverty of, 88; patriotism of, 89; and cleanliness of, 92; diseases of, 93; fondness of, for the hills, 176; open to religious instruction, 186; superstitions of, 193; intellectual ability of, 231.
Persimmon, lusciousness of the, 207.
Pipes, 118.
Political parties, 229.
Polygamy, 109.
Porters, guild of, 129.
Pottery, fine grades of, not produced, 218.

R.

Rainy season, 20, 125.
Registration, how effected, 119.
Religions, in Japan, 185; in China, 186; in Korea, 186, *sqq.*; observance of ceremonies perfunctory, 187.
Rockhill, Mr., on the independence of Korea, 251, 257, 259.
"Royal College," the, 228.

S.

Salutations, 110.
Schools, native, 159; governmental, 228; missionary, 234, 297, 300.
Shufeldt, Admiral, negotiates a treaty, 15.
Signal fires, 56, 246.
Silk industry, 50, 212.
Spirit-worship, 190, 193.
Stone-fights, 173.
Superstitions, 193.

Digitized by Google

T.

Temples, 191.
Tides, height of, 19.
Tobacco, use of, 117
Tourists, attractions of Japan for, 16, 17; and of Korea, 16.
Treaty, with Japan, 15; with the United States, 15; with European powers, 15.

V.

Vegetables, 209.

W.

Wall-paper, 124.
Walls, of the capital, 44; ordinary, how built, 125.
Watchmen, 54.
Wells a source of danger, 126, 280.
Women, seclusion of, 78, 96, 98; their physique, 79; neat appearance, 92; visits of, how managed, 104; influence of, 106, 150; dress of, 145; labors of, 151; earnestness of, in religious matters, 156, 314.
Woolens, not used, 222.
Work, not accounted honorable, 111.

THE END.

Digitized by Google

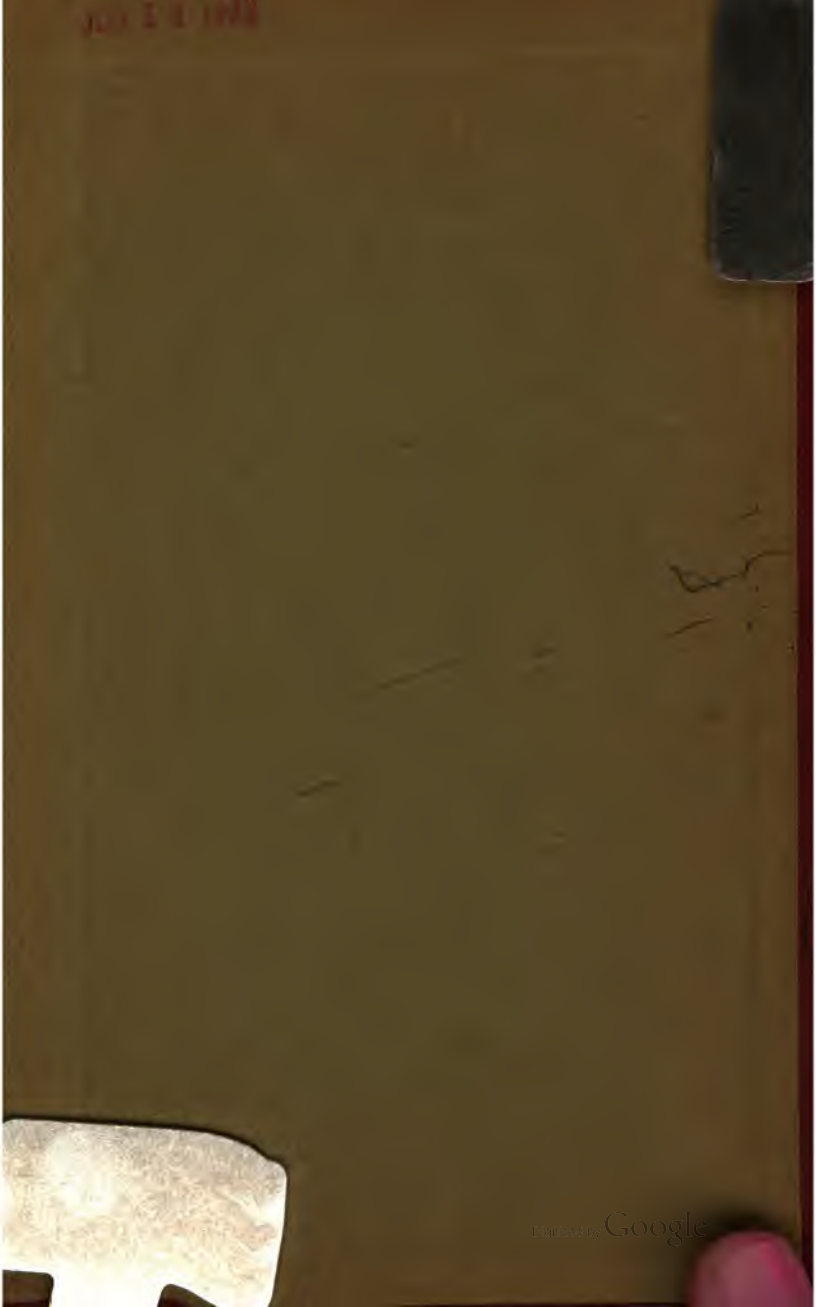
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google